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THE

MYSTIC COTTAGER

Chamoun OF *R*

CHAMOUNY:

A NOVEL.

As in the hollow breast of Appenine,
Beneath the shelter of encircling hills,
A myrtle rises far from human eye,
And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild;
So flourish'd blooming and unseen by all
The lovely Rosalie.

THOMSON'S SEASONS.

DUBLIN:

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1795.



A D D R E S S

TO THE

P U B L I C.

CONSIGNED to the benignant smile or a capricious frown of a disinterested public, these humble pages are presented as the genuine dictates of the moment of imagination, unbiassed by the assistance of compilation to frame their fable, or veil its imperfections; traced by the pen of juvenility, and sacred alone to the inspiration of compassion that excited the idea of attempting a simple

A D D R E S S.

tale free from the corruption of guile,
for the sole endeavour of raising
a trivial sum for the benefit of a dis-
tressed Orphan, deprived of the bles-
sing of sight, and thereby rendered
incapable of maintaining herself, con-
sequently dependant on the humani-
ty of those whom Heaven has
deigned to crown with affluence,
and inspired their hearts with libe-
rality to relieve the child of for-
row.

Under the auspices of a generous
public should this humble attempt
meet a favourable reception, the ju-
venile Authoress can alone impute its
success to their benevolence, and
trembling at the critic's glance of de-
precation, consoles herself only with
the hope that reflection will whisper

ADDRESS.

the unfeigned reality of its design, and the tear of pity fall on its errors, while the soul of sensibility will anticipate the tortures of suspense for its fate under such interesting circumstances.

Conscious deference shrinking like the tender sensitive, droops with fear, and the sunshine of approbation can alone revive it; but if blighted by the breath of censure, alas! the storm that levels the fancy-nursed embryo will desolate all future bloom. Relying on the humanity of an encouraging public, the orphan's devoted prayer shall rise to heaven as the grateful incense of a heart overflowing with the effusion of sensibility, indebted to their generosity, and amply recompenced by the lenient ap-

ADDRESS.

probation, the honest gleam of gratitude will ever glow in the heart of their

Most obliged humble Servant,

THE AUTHORESS.

THE
MYSTIC COTTAGER
OF
CHAMOUNY.

CHAP. I.

AUGUSTUS TANKERVILLE, Marquis of Sevigne, was a native of Switzerland, the last descendant of an ancient and noble family, who on the decease of his Marchioness, came over to reside in England, in order to try if by changing the scene he could divert the melancholy which was his inseparable companion, in the southern clime.

The Dowager Lady Mentoria, his aunt, who, was fondly endeared to him during the whole course of his life, determined to accompany him and his charming offspring; the eldest of whom, a son, had

very lately taken the title of St. Laurens, and the ladies, Adela and Louisa, were then in their seventeenth and eighteenth years, charming accomplished women, who had improved an elegant education by a refined understanding, moulded to every impression of virtue and genius; in short it was an arduous decision to adjudge the prize of beauty or sensibility to one in preference to the other.

Lady Adela was tall, and of exquisite proportion, and her complexion beautifully transparent; and the roseat bloom of health diffused its beauties on her cheek, her profuse hair of the palest brown, and the benignant softness that beamed from her fine blue eyes, gave her the appearance of a celestial divinity.

Lady Louisa was rather shorter than her sister, yet sufficiently tall to be a gracefully elegant figure. Her hair was auburn, and sported in the fantastic luxuriance of nature on a bosom and shoulders of the finest form; her complexion clear, her teeth beautifully white and regular, and a thousand dimples played round her coral lips; her eyes were dark and expressive, yet tempered with ineffable sweetness; her voice exquisitely melodious, and her genius lively and expanded; of the French and Italian languages she was perfect mistress; the science of music was her chief delight, and she touched the piano and

harp to perfection; in the dance she was the sprightly ærial of the scene, where her inimitable attitude and grace captivated every beholder.

Lady Adela with a constitution more delicate, had never studied to excel in that accomplishment, yet she joined the festive group, with a peculiar degree of graceful ease, but her principal perfection consisted in copying minutely elegant drawings, from the choicest collections of the most eminent proficients, add to which her natural taste, and the picturesque views that bounded the confines of the castle, gave unlimited scope to the prolific and accurate traces of her animated crayon.

Her amiable brother, Lord Edwin St. Laurens, possessed a noble spirit, a generous expansion of soul, and an understanding chaste and refined, while liberality, gratitude, and generosity were the aspiring virtues of his heart. He was now just of age, and was preparing to make an excursion through Switzerland, and explore the beauties of that country, before he undertook his trip to India, accompanied by his juvenile friend, the Chevalier D'Aubigne, then at Paris, and with whom he intended passing some weeks before his return: Ladies Adela and Louisa reluctantly parted with their brother, accompanied only by his faithful valet Carlos, who earnestly entreated to attend his master, "for there,"

fighed he, "in a romantic cottage, on the mountains dwells my sweet little Marcel-la; and if you will indulge me, honoured Sir, in this request, my life and services shall be ever devoted in gratitude." A manly tear was hastily brushed away, and Lord Edwin's acquiescent smile sealed his hopes.

The morning of departure arrived, and the Marquis embracing his son, bid him write often, and never forget he had left a parent in England, anxious for the welfare of a dear loved child, the pride and glory of his declining years.

Lord Edwin pressed his hand, uttered an affectionate avowal of obedience, and tenderly saluting his lovely sisters, departed from the castle.

The faithful Carlos, all gratitude for the favour of attending his master, redoubled his assiduity on every occasion. Carlos, though the son of a Swiss peasant, possessed great natural abilities, and had been instructed in the early part of his life in many necessary accomplishments, to fulfil the duties of his present station, by a gentleman residing in Savoy, who had recommended him to the patronage of Lord Edwin about two years since, possessing great good nature and a naturally lively disposition; Lord Edwin would often wonder at the visible gloom that sometimes overspread his countenance, in spite of every

endeavour to conceal it, but since the name of Marcella had escaped his lips, he was all life, all happiness, and merrily passed the hours with due deference and distinction to his noble master, who was now at no loss to guess the cause of his suspicions.

About the second week they arrived at the foot of the mountain, on whose summit the well known cottage of Marcella's parents reared its humble shelter; Carlos swiftly darting to the door, peeped through the casement, and gently tapped, instantly the latch was drawn and Marcella flew to the arms of Carlos.—Lord Edwin seated at a distance on an impending jut of the craggy steep, beheld with delight the faithful and sincere raptures of these artless lovers. Marcella was a pretty little figure, habited in a pale brown stuff jacket, with a short blue petticoat, that displayed one of the prettiest legs and yellow slippers in Savoy; her dark ringlets were confined by a blue silk net, through the folds of which many sportive curls wantoned o'er her polished forehead, a small handkerchief of lawn shaded her bosom, and on her arm was suspended a basket of luxuriant grapes just gathered from the vineyard behind the cottage.

After the moment of surprise was over, she advanced with Carlos towards Lord Edwin, and modestly offering the produce of her basket, entreated his Lordship to

walk in and take shelter from the meridian sun-beams, as the day was growing sultry. A cluster of the purple vintage was as gratefully accepted as bestowed, but the visit to the cottage was declined; Lord Edwin in fact did not mean to intrude on the worthy inmates, but wished to stroll and amuse himself for half an hour, he then promised Carlos he should return in three days and pass a week with these happy mountaineers, while he paid a visit to a family about thirty miles distant. Marcella's eyes glowing with delight seemed to thank him, and Carlos, filled with admiration of his kindness, bowed his grateful acknowledgments of the favour conferred with so much real condescension.

Lord Edwin kept his promise of sparing the enraptured Carlos, but his departure mightily pleased him, the poor fellow had arisen by day break, and at five he crept down stairs to wake the servants, and saddle his mule, which he fastened to the back gate, and entering the hall was met by Lord Edwin, who, tempted by the beauty of the morning, had arose to give him some orders forgot the preceding evening. "Are you already equipped, Carlos?" "Yes, my Lord, I shall now be off in five minutes," answered he, very deliberately, tying up his little bundle of linen, in which he had actually packed up one boot: Lord Edwin observed the circum-

stance, and stifled his risibility 'till the package was completely finished, and the poor fellow half crazy with delight, and his every thought employed in anticipating the joyful meeting, begging to know if his Lordship had any farther commands; being answered in the negative, instantly made his respectful obeisance and mounted his mule.

"Stop, Carlos," cried Lord Edwin, "do they usually travel here with one boot?"—Carlos instantly cast his eyes on his right leg, and beheld it only equipped with a stocking and slipper: "'Tis very true, my Lord," answered he, "but heaven knows where I have left it." "Why, if you should have occasion to make use of it," rejoined Lord Edwin, "only untie your bundle and you'll find it carefully wedged in." Carlos instantly laid his hand on the handkerchief and to his great confusion felt the truth of his conviction; "Bless my heart," cried he, twitching the knot, "'twas Walter's fault, for he was asking me so many questions about Marcella all the time, that I could attend to nothing but the pleasure of gratifying his inquiries." Lord Edwin enjoyed a hearty laugh at the bustle that detained the anxious traveller, who had not even waited to swallow a morsel of breakfast, but a few moments completed the arrangements, and

once more mounting he galloped off and was out of sight in an instant.

Time did not hobble on crutches with Carlos and Marcella, and at the appointed time he returned, delighted with the promise of again passing her cottage to bid adieu, in his way to England.

CHAP. II.

LORD EDWIN's tour again commenced and he determined visiting the Vale of Chamouny, he therefore hired a guide and bent his course to that beautifully romantic scene. Here he rested to contemplate the roseat tints of morn interspersed with golden fluids, reflecting its glowing beam on the summit of the mountains : A murmuring cascade broke the solemn silence that reigned around ; the dulcet notes of a shepherd's pipe wafted on the bosom of the breeze sounded from the valley ; here a huge cliff bent its lowering brow majestically grand ; there one more fertilized exhibited the traces of the plough, on its

rugged sides, while blooming wild weeds luxuriantly hung in waving wreaths from innumerable impending projections of rocks; many beautiful vagrant rills gently stole through various crevices, while some impeded in their course by rude fragments of stone impetuously broke a passage and precipitated the sparkling foam down a tremendous declivity 'till it paused in the mazy windings of a gentle stream.

"How sublimely beautiful is this wild luxuriance of prolific nature," exclaimed the enraptured spectator. The sun was rising to animate each picturesque beauty, but the heat was great; "Let us descend the mountain," said Lord Edwin, "I am very thirsty, and perhaps at those distant cottages I could procure a draught of milk." "Aye plenty, your honour," replied the guide, "if you will condescend to accept some at the cottage of Reuben and Geraldine Desmoulines, where the sweet girls will be up, and can supply your honour with an excellent breakfast, for I am always welcome as a prince, and any company I conduct are shewn the greatest respect." "Proceed," said Lord Edwin, "my curiosity may possibly be yet more gratified."

Slowly they descended a winding path 'till they reached the valley, and here they again rested. On every side the towering Glaciers reared their snow-crowned heads

in a thousand fantastic forms, and proudly contrasted their admirable superiority of magnificence with the fertilized mountains beneath, while scattered on their summit and various tracks of the acclivity in irregular romantic shelterings of the steep peeped the white cottages of the peasants; in short, no situation could exhibit a scene more diversified and pleasing; here the eye wandered from one beauty to another more enchanting, and when it seemed to have discovered some still more superior view, the slightest glance presented another if possible more inviting and wonderful, apparently raised by the power of magic to captivate the astonished beholder.

The shining bee stole from her hive, and murmuring through the air was busily extracting from the bloom her liquid sweet; two or three hovels only situate in perilous apertures of the mountain, had suffered devastation by the falling of the snow from the tremendous heights, where a coagulated mass had lately been driven by the winds, bearing in its passage mouldering fragments of rock, whose inevitable direction had crushed and partly smothered the desolated roofs. Lord Edwin shuddered, yet the spectacle was truly grand, for part of the mass had fallen in different directions, some on the edge of the steep, some in the meandering rivulet, and part rested on the rustic one-railed

bridge that crossed the stream, from whose uncouth structure suspended innumerable ificles of the most curious form; the ærial choristers were warbling their oraisons, and the inhabitants of the vale seemed the only undelighted enjoyers of the scene, because to them it exhibited no novelty, consequently but little allurements; the eye of the stranger alone beheld it with admiration, and the heart of sensibility could alone feel the exquisite sensations of delight its contemplation inspired.

By the most inviting paths, bordered with flowers, strewn by the hand of nature, they at length arrived at the cottage; nothing could be more centrally situated to command the surrounding beauties of this magic spot: The door was open, and a charming girl had just entered with a lap full of flowers to deck her burnished casement, whose chequered pane glowed with the refulgence of the rising sun.

“Ah! Madelon,” said the guide, “is dame Giralaine up? Can you furnish his honour with a cup of milk, an oat cake, or a glass of your excellent mead?” Madelon dropped a curtsy, and blushing more beautiful than the roses she held in her hand, modestly entreated Lord Edwin to walk in and accept their humble fare. Not at all displeased at his guide’s perspicuity in whispering that Madelon was a pretty girl, he contemplated, as he walked by

her side, the sweet simplicity of her regular features, which though they could not be deemed handsome, yet an indescribable something in her modest smile told you her bosom was the recess of tranquillity, the mansion of peace.

She then led him to a neat apartment, where a second female was merrily turning the spinning wheel, and sweetly singing some rural ballad, but the moment Lord Edwin entered the song ceased, and the wheel was stopped, while the enchanting countenance of the industrious peasant presenting him her chair with a graceful curtsy, made him start with astonishment, her straw hat, which hung on the back of it was instantly tied on, and modestly intended to shade the deranged plaits of a neat lawn cap, which confined part of her luxuriant light tresses, while a few straggling ringlets played on her lovely face; her sparkling blue eyes beamed the very soul of sensibility through the shades of the finest dark eye lashes, that resembled fringe of the most beautiful gloss and texture, and the exquisitely traced arches of the same colour, penciled by the hand of nature, added a still superior elegance to her features; her dress was simple yet the very model of neatness, and while Lord Edwin gazed with rapture, his fancy compared her to a flower of exquisite beauty and delicacy, reared in an uncultivated soil

by the hand of Providence, blooming in the shades of obscurity.

Entranced by the delightful contemplation, he was roused from his reverie by the voice of his guide, addressing a pretty little girl about twelve years old, who was tenderly gazing on a nest of young birds she humanely was endeavouring to feed. In tears my little Josephine, reiterated he. "What have you there, sweet cottager," asked Lord Edwin, peeping over her shoulder, "that causes that compassionate tear?"

"A nest of unfledged birds, your honour," replied she, wiping off the crystal pendant on the back of her worsted mitten, "I bought them this morning of three cruel boys, who were going to torment them; I had but one florin which they gladly took, so I popped them into my apron, and tying up the bundle of faggots I had been to pick up, placed them on my head, and come home pretty well loaded; but what vexes me most is they wont eat, and I can't help shedding a tear they seem so pitiful."

Well, thought Lord Edwin, what perfection shall I next discover in this enviable vale; already have I been enchanted with the beauties of nature, and the aspiring virtues of generosity and humanity have just presented themselves to complete the picture.

In one corner sat a pleasing looking woman about fifty, mending a net, who, with the utmost cordiality begged his honour would partake their humble breakfast; "Reuben will soon be home with the milk;" said she, "and Madelon shall spread the table in a minute."

Carlos, who was lolling *Il Penferoso* over the back of his mule at the door, happened to address his master by the title of my Lord, and the ear of dame Giral-dine catching the sound, she started from her seat, and whispering Rosalie, she instantly tripped up stairs and brought down an old fashioned high-backed chair, with a yellow stuff cushion. "Your Lordship," said the sweetly blushing maid, "unused to so hard a seat, will do us the honour to accept this as much easier."

Lord Edwin smiled, and to prevent apologies instantly exchanged, and drew near the table, which was expeditiously spread with grapes, hard eggs, cream cheese, a piece of honeycomb, a brown loaf, some oat cakes, with a bottle of mead and some delicate whey, the milk only was wanting to complete the *dejeuner*, which was brought in a few minutes, frothed, in a large pitcher, borne by the venerable cottager, whose arrival was announced by the caresses of a little lame Chamois *, who

* Mountain Goat.

left his straw basket and limped out to welcome his return : 'Twas Rosalie's Chamois, she had found it almost famished and expiring with a fractured leg on the mountains about a twelvemonth since, and it had been from that time her favourite coffet, partially grateful to herself and Reuben, but scarce ever noticed the rest of the family.

Reuben, who had shrunk behind Lord Edwin's chair, reluctantly took his seat at the earnest solicitation of his noble guest, though he would much rather have kept his station in the rear. " This breakfast is to me superior to the most sumptuous treat !" said Lord Edwin, " and the pleasure of memory will often retrace, with the highest satisfaction, the delight I have experienced in the society of this hospitable family ; yes, Desmoulines, I truly envy your allotted portion of happiness."

Rosalie probably attending more to the energy of this eloquent address, and adoring the condescension of the illustrious speaker, than paying attention to what she was about, forgot the sharpness of the knife she was using, and her negligent hand slipping, the pointed steel made an incision in her left arm, from whence the blood issued fast, and Lord Edwin alarmed at the accident, hastily snatched his handkerchief from his pocket, and bound it round the wound. This mark of polite-

ness suffused a blush on the cheek of Rosalie, her heart palpitated she knew not why, and the pain had instantly vanished, since the application of the magic handkerchief, while she timidly apologized, and hoped he would give her leave to keep it 'till his return through the vale, when it should be properly washed and carefully restored."

Lord Edwin, who did not want perspicuity to discover the reality of this little stratagem, replied, he thought he should alter his route, and not pass the vale on his return. "Ah! then," replied Rosalie with faltering voice, while the rose vanished from her cheek, "we shall never see you again, and this delicate handkerchief must be washed through while you stay." Lord Edwin was now convinced of the reality of his ideas; he had observed her fine eyes earnestly fixed on his, unknowing the magic influence their lustre beamed—and gently taking her hand, "don't trouble yourself about such a trifle," said he, "keep it 'till I call again, 'tis very probable I may return in the course of a fortnight, and if the pain of your arm will permit you to enjoy a walk, you and your sisters shall be the directresses of my footsteps to explore the farther beauties of this charming elysium: Lead on then, sweet girls, and give me proof of your taste in the different views you each shall point out."

Rosalie's heart leaped with delight, and the hats and mittens were on in an instant. Reuben led the way, and Madelon soon arrived at her favourite spot, which Lord Edwin acknowledged to be well worth remark and admiration. "Then you'll not approve my choice," sighed Rosalie, "for every body says its a pleasing prospect but too dull, turn on the left and descend to that rivulet."—Lord Edwin obeyed in silence, 'till his wandering steps brought him to the most beautifully romantic recess among the cliffs, art or nature could devise. From the crevices of a mountain burst an irregular cascade, spangling in its fall innumerable flowers that sprang on the craggy steep, while in various niches apparently almost impracticable to climb, rested the straggling Chamois from the excesses of the sun; but what most attracted Lord Edwin's notice was a small marble shrine, shaded by a luxuriant cypress, while a thicket of rose trees guarded it with its blooming branches, and a profusion of twining flowers encircled it on every side; on a small tablet was engraved the following lines, "Sacred to the memory of L. S. C. the loveliest rose of Chamouny," a small lute was tied with a black ribbon to the bough of cypress that wept over the tomb, and Reuben as he turned away dropt a tear.

“ Whose shade owns this emblem of gratitude ?” asked Lord Edwin. Reuben shook his head and pointing to Rosalie clasped his hands and walked slowly and pensively on. “ When your Lordship honours us with another visit, time, I hope, will not be so precious as it is now, and then you shall hear the history of this valued shrine ; but the day is hurrying on, and if your Lordship means to proceed ’tis time to pursue your course over the mountains, before the night draws in, as you will not find accomodation farther on. Lord Edwin repressed his curiosity, and taking his advice, returned to the cottage.

Rosalie’s prolific pen frequently produced some poetic composition, and Madelon one evening found her fertile imagination deeply employed in penciling down the following lines as she had taken her seat in this favourite romantic recess at the foot of the cypress, whither she had strolled to indulge her exquisitely enjoyed Pensoroso.

THE MATERNAL SHRINE.

Where clust’ring roses vernal sweets combine,
To shade this consecrated marble shrine ;
When moonlight sheds her soft enamour’d beam,
And silv’ry shadows tint the vagrant stream ;

While Philomel repeats her plaintive tale.
Far in the mazes of the winding vale :
'Tis then I lull the pensive hour away,
With my lov'd lute's most fascinating lay,
Whose soothing melody I fervent love,
And softly press it as I lonely rove :
For oft' beneath this drooping cypress tree
Soft mimic echo distant answers me :
So sweetly consonant the plaintive strain
To wayward fancy seems to sooth my pain ;
And when I shed the heart sprung trembling tear,
Some angel form methinks is hov'ring near,
On ærial wing benignly wafted nigh,
To catch and bear to heav'n the sacred sigh ;
The ev'ning incense of my votive pray'r,
Oft' pour'd in secret on the desert air,
When I indulge the luxury of woe,
'Till friendship soothes the tear and bids it cease to
flow.

Rosalie quitting the room, soon after returned with a basket which she had filled with grapes, pomegranates, and almonds. "Here, my Lord" said the lovely girl, as she entered, placing her hand on her bosom, to convince him the ejaculation came from its most sacred recess, "Here, alas ! " is the only tribute my gratitude can offer for your polite condescension," casting her eyes at the same instant on the hand-

kerchief that enveloped her wounded arm, " 'tis a poor recompense, to be sure, but the best our vineyard produces to refresh a thirsty traveller, and our good mother is preparing a few eggs and dried tongues, with a bottle of mead, which we hope your Lordship won't be offended at, for Mr. Carlos can fasten them on his mule."

Lord Edwin heartily thanked her, and shaking hands with the whole family, promised to call in ten days for his handkerchief, and bring little Josephine a bird for her humanity to the callow brood her last florin had purchased, and accepting a bunch of roses from Madelon he mounted his mule.

" Bless me," said Rosalie, " this basket has lost its handle, and will tire Mr. Carlos's hand to carry, but I believe I have got a string will fasten it." Saying which she drew a piece of blue ribbon from her bosom and twisting it through the plaiting lifted it up on the saddle whilst Lord Edwin transfixed to his seat, had observed with a sensation of pleasure this last act of Rosalie's. " God bless you, sweet cottagers," said he, " and remember, Rosalie, not to remove the bandage too soon," then waving his hand rode off. Ah! thought Rosalie, I needed not that injunction, 'tis too soft to remove for a coarser, and I shall never, never have such an honour again. Alas! poor girl, little did thy innocent bo-

some suspect a deeper wound was pierced within thy heart.

From the small casement of her chamber she secretly watched the track of the mules 'till the envious mountain's obtruding steep hid the scarcely discernable objects, and closing the window with an unusual sullen reluctance, she descended to her spinning, but she did not sing; once she attempted the ballad she was warbling when Lord Edwin entered the cottage, but her voice failed and the song was never repeated.

As she sat meditating on the visit of Lord Edwin to their cottage, for which she conceived the honour totally owing to the friendship and favour of his guide; gratitude to the poor but friendly muleteer inspired her pen to dedicate a few lines expressive of his occupation, as her fancy suggested the idea of his usual perilous track over the mountains, subject to the emergent haste of the evening traveller, through the rigours of gloomy winter, or effervent heat of sultry summer.

THE MULETEER.

When o'er the moon a misty veil,
Obscures her pallid sylvan light,
When howling winds burst o'er the dale,
And no bright eve-star lends its light;

Then o'er the cliff's impending brow
Our lowly muleteer must go.

His twinkling lamp he cautious bears,
To guide him from the chasms deep;
And oft' the rushing cataract hears,
When every eye is seal'd in sleep;
For drear the hour through hail or snow,
Alas ! the muleteer must go.

Joyous he views the rising dawn
Break from the thick-rob'd shades of night :
With fluid gold the blushing morn
Sheds her soft ambient beam of light :
O'er craggy steep ascending flow,
Our blithsome muleteer must go.

The early songstress sweet reclines
Upon her mate's soft plumag'd breast,
And warbling 'midst the waving pines,
She courts the traveller to rest ;
For oft' as her sweet numbers flow,
The muleteer forgets to go.

Yet, tho' severe, the toil he braves,
At midnight shelter'd in some cot,
He heeds not how the tempest raves,
And all his hardships are forgot ;
When mountain grapes, and mountain cheer,
Refresh the weary muleteer.

Then traveller his care repay,
And let him turn his ragged mule,
Back to his hovel bend his way,
From fervid heats to shades more cool ;

For thus your bounty through the year
Supports the humble muleteer.

CHAP. III.

IT was the tenth evening, as Lord Edwin promised, when he returned to Chamouny; Rosalie and Madelon had strolled to the top of the mountain to discover if the traveller approached; their best grey stuff jackets had been neatly put on, and their clean lawn caps were fastened with primrose top-knots, each took their spindles and seated themselves on the summit of the steep, to watch his arrival; the shades of evening veiled the fading landscape, and the moon was rising in faint silvery gleam. Rosalie grew restless, she tangled the flax, threw the spindle aside, took it up again, and again the flax broke: her patience was every way exhausted, and once more 'ere she returned to the cottage, she climbed an impending part of the mountain, and with earnest and outstretched eyes, she at a great distance descried the mules slowly pacing the winding track;

instantly the blood forsook her cheek—returned—fled—and returned again. Madelon observed her agitation with the deepest regret, and carefully concealed her thoughts, determined however to mark the reception on all sides, and Lord Edwin soon after gained the summit. “How are my sweet girls?” said he, extending a hand to each, “I have a trifle for Madelon, a charming bird for Josephine, and a lute for Rosalie, who, I am informed, plays delightfully.” Rosalie thanked him more eloquently with her eyes than her lips, and they descended to the vale.

Impatient to impart the pleasing news, Rosalie tripped quickly on to apprise Geraldine, while Lord Edwin chatted with Madelon, and passing a withered rose-tree, “Bless me,” said he, “how the roses have faded in Chamouny, and even the cheeks of Rosalie have lost their usual bloom since I saw them. “Ah!” replied Madelon, “they have drooped indeed, but I still entertain a hope, *some* of them may revive.”

The peculiar emphasis rested on the word *some*, accompanied by an arch look and a half smile, did not escape Lord Edwin, and he would have asked an explanation had not Rosalie and Josephine at that moment joined them.

“Where are your little birds?” asked he, tapping the rosy cheeks of Josephine.

"Oh, all dead, my Lord," answered she, shaking her head, "they did not live two days after you left us; poor Rosalie's arm was so painful she could not spin, so I was obliged to help her, and perhaps neglected them."

"Never mind," replied Lord Edwin, "Carlos has a sweet bird for you." At that moment the faithful domestic entered with the portmanteau and bird; Josephine eagerly examined its beauty, but wished it had been a parroquet, that she might have taught it the name of the generous doner. "Do you sing?" asked Lord Edwin. Josephine again shook her head; "Ask Rosalie, my Lord, she's our sweetest nightingale, though she has not sung a song this week past." Lovely innocent, thought Lord Edwin, how sweetly hast thou revealed the ill secreted thorn that rankles in the bosom of thy charming sister.

Supper was served by Madelon soon after, and Lord Edwin entreated to stay and accept a spare bed they sometimes accommodated travellers with, while Carlos was provided with another at a neighbouring cottage.

The blushing tints of rosy morning scarcely dawned when Lord Edwin was awakened by the plaintive melody of Rosalie's lute under his window, and rising he peeped through his casement; she had taken her seat in a little arbor which half

concealed her by the profusion of roses that depended from the rural lattice, while the expressive beauty of her countenance depicted her to the eye of fancy the most perfect semblance of the queen of love reposing in her Paphian bower. She had fastened the lute to a violet ribbon which hung at her side, and when she had finished her plaintive air, gently let it fall to its appropriate situation, and remained some moments in a deep reverie, 'till the approach of Josephine with a fine basket of peaches roused her from the attitude of contemplation.

Some few words, uttered in a low key escaped the attentive ear of Lord Edwin, but as they entered the house he plainly distinguished the voice of Rosalie, utter the following words.

“Don't touch them, Josephine, 'till his Lordship comes down, I dare say he likes peaches, and at least we can give him our share; 'twas lucky Lindor should send them, step up and listen if his Lordship is stirring, while I gather a few blossoms to ornament the parlour.”

The voice was then silent, and Lord Edwin drawing aside the little muslin curtain that had cautiously concealed him, finished his dress, when casting his eyes round to admire the neatness of his apartment, he observed a miniature suspended on a small hook by a piece of black ribbon

much worn. Curiosity was on the wing, he approached, and taking it in his hand, strictly examined it. "Whose could it be," it was rather improbable it should belong to any of the family, and he had never yet seen any one in this cottage whom it resembled, certain he was if it proved a real copy, the original must be a most beautiful woman, and the robe she wore, added to the band of pearls which confined part of her flowing tresses, bespoke her at least a person of dignity; in short, it was a mystery his penetration could not unfold; he hung it up and viewing it at a distance, fancied he could trace the bewitching smile of Rosalie, yet the idea seemed so absurd he instantly altered his opinion, when a transient thought recalled to his memory the promised explanation of the little shrine he had visited in the recess of the mountain, and half convinced him this miniature tended to elucidate his surmise, and he descended the stairs with a full determination of claiming Reuben's promise.

CHAP. IV.

CICELY, the notable girl who performed the drudgery of the family, smoothed her clean yarn apron, and dropping a very low curtsy, ushered him into the little parlour, where the breakfast awaited his descent. The family were all assembled and each hoped he had rested well. "Perfectly so," answered Lord Edwin, "if the nightingales in this part of the world did but lull one to sleep by their evening song, instead of chanting so merrily of a morning."

Rosalie's cheek instantly felt the force of his address, Madelon smiled, and Geraldine nodded at Rosalie, expressive of her condemnation, in having disturbed the slumberer.

"I hope your Lordship will excuse it," said the worthy Reuben, "Rosalie would deem herself ungrateful not to delight in her new present, the charming proof of condescension and politeness in so illustrious a stranger as your Lordship, 'tis an

early hour I presume with your honour, but for us peasants 'tis almost noon day."

"True," replied Lord Edwin, "but it was not sleep occasioned my absence, for in fact I have been this half hour contemplating an elegant miniature up stairs, and if it would not be deemed impertinent, I should like to know whose resemblance it was."

Madelon looked earnestly at her mother, while Rosalie's cheek turned pale, and a starting tear irradiated her eye; every one was silent but the innocent and loquacious Josephine, who, clasping her hands, and gazing tenderly on Rosalie, cried, "Oh! my Lord, don't you think it very like our sweet Rosalie, why its her own dear mamma's picture."

Confusion and surprise prevented Lord Edwin's reply, and as no one appeared able or willing to contradict the assertion, he was pretty well convinced of the reality of the story. At length recovering the power of articulation, he ventured to inquire a few particulars, and Josephine being silenced, Geraldine proceeded to relate the narrative of Rosalie, "who, she said, was born in that cottage about seventeen years since, that M. Tourville, their noble landlord, one evening, at a late hour, brought a most beautiful lady wrapped in a close veil, in a chaise and four, that a gentleman accompanied them, and

an elderly servant on horseback. M. Tourville told her the Lady was a widow in very unhappy circumstances, and near her time, earnestly begging Giralaine to undertake the charge of the infant, if it lived, and also be faithful and diligent to the lady, for whose board she should receive an ample compensation, as her health was in a very precarious state, and she wished to live recluse.

Giralaine added, the lady appeared almost distracted at parting with her companions, and as the carriage drove off she heard the servant ask the postillions if the Marquis meant to cross the mountain with guides and lamps, or if he staid in the vale till morning; but they replying they had orders to proceed, drove on; by this she conceived her lovely inmate was some person of consequence in disguise, and did not doubt but one day this strange adventure would be cleared up; that she passed by the name of Madam Lavinia de St. Clair, and was brought to bed of the charming daughter he now beheld, to whom the enraptured parent gave the name of Rosalie; but, alas! continued the worthy Giralaine, the dear affable lady was never cheerful, and a visible and hasty decline soon succeeded.

M. Tourville came often to see her, and at his earnest entreaty she was removed to Montpellier for change of air: Ah! never

shall I forget our parting ; the sweet babe was left, drowned in tears, to my care, for I could not leave my family, and as she took a last kiss, she tied that miniature round the bosom of the infant, " take care of it Giraldine, for my child," said she, " it may one day be useful, I need not say it is the faithful resemblance of her wretched mother," she was then helped into the chaise, and drove off in an agony of grief.

Since that time our sweet charge has never left us. M. Tourville constantly visited us twice a year, and would take the greatest delight in seeing Miss Rosalie grow up so handsome, books of all sorts were brought by him for her instruction, but she was never suffered to visit him at Paris : Poor dear Madam de St. Clair, alas ! lived but three weeks after her arrival at Montpellier, leaving her sweet infant to the guardianship of M. Tourville and the gentleman who brought her first here, but being a great personage, he never condescends to pay us a visit, but sends his old steward once a year with a handsome salary for her board, and it is now near three months since we have received news of M. Tourville, who we fear is ill.

" God avert such a misfortune !" exclaimed Rosalie, " It is much about the time our annual visitor arrives, Oh, methinks I long to see good Mr. Montague."

“Montague,” cried Lord Edwin, “pray what sort of a man may he be, is his hair remarkable white, and has he a small red mark on the left cheek?”

“Yes, that he has,” answered Josephine, “and I often look at it as I sit on his knee.”

“And does he not live with the Marquis of Sevigne?” asked Lord Edwin, with apparent agitation.

“Oh, I don’t know,” replied Rosalie, “he tells us he is bound to secrecy, and we must not ask, but he hopes one day to convey me to England in all the splendor I deserve, and frequently he sheds tears as he sits gazing on me; in vain have I conjured him on my knees to reveal my hapless tale, but he always evades my request, and while my pension is constantly remitted I am happy in the protection of my adopted parent, who has faithfully and tenderly guarded my helpless infancy, and sorrowful will be the day if I should ever leave them; but ’tis strange, my Lord, you should know Mr. Montague, I wish he may come to-morrow for he is expected this week.”

“I wish he may,” replied Lord Edwin much embarrassed, “and I will prolong my stay a day or two in consequence; for should he prove to be the person I suspect, it may be in my power to render myself serviceable to you; but tell me, sweet

girl, how that miniature came to be left in a stranger's chamber, suppose they had purloined it?"

"Oh lack-a-day," answered Giralaine, "we have no thieves in Chamouny, and 'tis hard to suspect; but you must know, my Lord, that chamber is our dear young lady's, but she is so affable and kind that she frequently sleeps with Madelon, to accommodate strangers whom the guide often calls with, to taste my mead; for though we are private cottagers we are always happy to oblige any traveller who will honour us with their company."

"You are very good and bountiful," said Lord Edwin, "and I must now claim my friend Reuben's promise relative to the little shrine, although I can partly guess to whose memory it is consecrated."

"Then doubtless your Lordship can suppose it no other than Madame St. Clair's, and so it is: You must know, the dear lady used frequently to stroll to that spot, which she called the Recess of Solitude, and there she would pass whole days in reading and weeping, so soon after she died I erected that tomb, and as all our neighbours used to adore the very path she trod, and admire her beauty, I thought it would be no offence to stile her the sweetest Rose of Chaumony, and such is the inscription you have read: 'This romantic place you may be sure is dear to us all,'

for every eye in the vale has shed its grateful tears there ; and our lovely charge too often indulges melancholy at the foot of that cypress, when she can steal out alone."

"And could you never learn the family or connexions of Madam St. Clair?" said Lord Edwin.

"No, your honour, we never dare ask M. Tourville, he was alway so secret, and Madame never dropped the least hint ; and sure it could be no business of ours, for as we could not relieve her sorrows, why should we ever seek to know them?"

Rosalie sighed, and a responsive one echoed from the bosom of Lord Edwin : "I have caught the infection of your low spirits, sweet girl," said he, "do fetch your lute and enliven us with some of your favourite melody.

Rosalie obeyed, and Lord Edwin taught her a beautiful air, of which he was passionately fond, and which the admirable taste of Rosalie seemed to improve.

CHAP. V.

MOST part of the day was past in viewing the beauties of the vale, and when the gold-empurpled ray of evening shed its parting gleam upon the mountains, a poor blind youth from a neighbouring hamlet playing on a fantastic pipe and tabor soon summoned the cottagers to a little lawn, where a rustic ballet was formed, to the great amusement of Lord Edwin, who seated on a distant bench, enjoyed the innocent delight that manifested itself in each smiling countenance, and when the piper and the villagers retired, the family turned into their cottage to partake of their simple supper which Giraldine had prepared, and at an early hour they sought the soothing insensibility of tranquil slumber sacred to the soul of peace.

The night was majestically beautiful, a solemn silence prevailed—Lord Edwin gently opened his casement, silvered by the moon, which exactly beamed on the

miniature ; a rustling gale agitated the poplars, and gently waved the dew-weighed heads of the full blown roses that encircled the chequered pane, and the perfume they exhaled was exquisite. Sleep's magic fillet could not veil his eye, Montague was hourly expected, Montague, the steward of his father ! 'Twas strange ! 'twas mysterious ! He knew Montague constantly visited Italy every summer, but he always understood his own private affairs demanded his attendance ; his father too had been very circumspect in his conduct, for he had never heard the most distant hint that could awaken suspicion, he would therefore wait the event of Montague's arrival ; and with such reflection he closed his window, and retired to his cleanly coarse pillow 'till the voice of Rosalie and the trampling of mules under his window awakened him from his disturbed and irregular slumbers.

He was not long dressing, for the voice of Montague maddened his impatience, and faltering yet resolute he descended to the parlour, where the good old man had seated Josephine on his knee, and was answering her quick-repeated questions concerning a favourite lap-dog she had given him last year, when the voice of Lord Edwin complimenting him jocularly on his safe arrival at the cottage, petrified him to his chair. " You are a man of taste, Montague," cried he, " to prefer the hos-

pitiable reception of these worthy peasants in preference to any accomodation you could receive in the vale of Chamouny; Giraldine's cream cheefes suit your palate, Rosalie's grapes are more luscious than any vineyard here produces, and the dried tongues and oat cakes of Madelon's preparing, are a most inviting bon bouche to refresh a fatigued traveller, hobbling over uncouth mountains purely through kindness to his relations."

A sarcastic smile accompanied these last words, and Montague abashed and confounded, felt their full force on his cheek, where the flush of conscious duplicity indicated the explicit truth, as he faintly acknowledged that he frequently called as he passed.

"Nay," replied Lord Edwin, "spare those lips the disgrace of a falsehood, we all know the extent of your travels never exceeds the boundary of this vale, I am also acquainted with the motives of your embassy, therefore be candid, you need not fear reproof when acting on the principles of honesty and benevolence; but you and I must have some private conversation on the subject, for depend on it I shall revert to facts, such as have long been entrusted to your secrecy, and expect an impartial and faithful account of this mysterious conduct, you know the irritability of my temper, and your ready compliance

with my wish will alone prove the sincerity of the attachment you have ever professed for me.

CHAP. VI.

LORD EDWIN then left the room with a countenance expressive of unusual ferocity, and such as the faithful Montague during a service of twenty-five years had never seen clouded with the furious storms of anger; for his young Lord he would readily have braved every danger, but to betray the confidence reposed in him by the Marquis, after being so strictly enjoined to secrecy, was a point of honour he could not reconcile himself to give up, and he conceived himself plunged in an inextricable labyrinth, yet as Lord Edwin had discovered this charming protegee, and seemed to be perfectly acquainted with great part of the affair, doubtless his information had been accidentally obtained from Giralbine or Rosalie, consequently, on a moment's reflection, he concluded the Marquis could never reproach him for

explaining the remainder, which would ever reflect honour on himself, and could be no farther prejudice to Lord Edwin; he therefore determined to disclose every circumstance within his knowledge, and leave the event to providence.

He then snatched up his hat and crossing the lawn entered the vineyard, where he beheld Lord Edwin reclining on a rustic bench, minutely examining the miniature of Madame de St. Clair. "Come hither," said he, seizing the arm of Montague with a degree of impetuous energy, "Do you know the original of this copy?" The poor old man (who knew an evasive answer would only tend to irritate Lord Edwin) replied he had seen the lady whose resemblance it bore, but did not know who she was, or ever should." "Why not?" asked his Lordship, "you must be more explicit; where did you first see her, and with whom?"

"With my Lord the Marquis," answered Montague, "about seventeen years since, and all I know of the transaction is, I was one evening at ten o'clock ordered to pack a small portmanteau, in consequence of a letter my Lord had just received from a private hand, which appeared to have agitated him greatly; the carriage was immediately ordered with post horses, and myself the only person permitted to attend him, and we pursued our journey to

Paris as fast as carriages and vessels could carry us, but the Marquis observed a solemn silence the greatest part of the way, and when he did condescend to ask a question, 'twas fullen and snappish.

At length we arrived at an obscure inn very late in the evening, where a very elegant lady fainted on my master's shoulder, and I was ordered by a French gentleman to leave the room; in half an hour fresh horses were ordered, and the above lady and gentleman stepped into the carriage with the Marquis, and drove quickly off.

Shall I confess my curiosity was awakened and I ventured to ask Janette, the bar-maid, if she knew the parties, but she, poor girl, spoke very little English, and that in so complicated a dialect, I could not gain one particle of the desired information, for they were perfect strangers, and "Je ne sçais pas," was the prevalent answer from the Maitre d'Hotel to Le Valet d'Ecurie.

About three days after the carriage stopped one evening at this cottage, good dame Giraldine's candle would have been extinguished in another moment, (for the good folks were just undressing) when I was ordered to tap at the door, out popped the head of Reuben to inquire who disturbed them, and the voice of M. Tourville from the carriage instantly brought him to the door.

"I know the remaining circumstances of Madame St. Clair's story, therefore abridge that part and proceed from the Marquis's departure." Montague bowed and continued.

We then returned to the confines of Paris, where we left M. Tourville and made the best of our way to England, where about five weeks after the Marquis's sister, who was a nun in some convent, died, and the next post brought account of the death of Madame St. Clair. Ah! I shall never forget being called into the Marquis's chamber; Montague, said he poor Madame St. Clair has paid the debt of nature, after giving birth to a lovely daughter; I trust you have never revealed the circumstances of our tour, or her departure from Paris, after the secrecy I enjoined you to observe; you, and you only, are acquainted with the business, swear you will never divulge the confidence I am going to repose in your bosom, as it is of the utmost importance to be concealed at present; to your hands then I shall remit proper sums for the maintenance of this infant, to whom I am left guardian, you shall convey it every summer, and bring me proper information how she is, and when it is in my power to bring her to England, I shall feel myself happy in having her under my more immediate care,

which at present her infant state prevents me.

Such was the promise I engaged to fulfil, and as M. Tourville is very lately dead, I am deputed to convey Miss Rosalie to the castle, and from thence to Thornley Abbey."

"To the solitudes of Thornley," cried Lord Edwin, "is my father going to immure this blossom, amidst the rest of his secluded sweets, buried in oblivion there?"

"Why she was to have staid at the castle, but when I told the Marquis how handsome she was, he instantly altered his mind."

"She goes to Thornley then," said he, "'till the departure of Edwin, for should he see her with the same partial eyes you do, I know not the consequence, and then the measure of my uneasiness would be complete."

"A charming plan," replied Lord Edwin, "but some deep mystery remains, which I will endeavour to elucidate: Charming Rosalie! if she loves like me, no power on earth shall separate us; take her to England, I will follow every stage in disguise, to protect her, and by the time she has inhabited the antique abbey about a week, I shall make my formal entre, by popping in upon lady Mentoria and her fair companion, in the midst of their dinner, when least expected."

"Mercy defend me," exclaimed Montague, "is it possible my Lord will risk the Marquis's eternal displeasure, by fixing his affection almost instantaneously on the very object his caution would conceal and utmost vigilance separate?"

"Every remonstrance is vain," replied Lord Edwin, rising hastily from his seat, "I am going in search of Rosalie, and in the mean time do you inform Geraldine." He then turned into the cottage, and found Rosalie at her busy wheel. "Lay your spinning aside," said he, "we must have a few moments conversation: You are going to England, charming Rosalie, with Montague, in two days, he has brought a letter expressive of the Marquis's commands, and you must obey them. Rosalie involuntarily laid her hand on his arm, "Oh, my Lord, how shall I reconcile myself to leave this peaceful home, these dear-loved protectors of my infancy," and a tear trembled in her eye. "Make yourself happy," replied Lord Edwin, "I will conduct you, sweet innocent, my arm shall guard you safe from every danger to the shores of England."

"Ah no, my Lord, you jest but with my sorrow, how is it possible?" cried she, clasping her hands, "at any rate, I am most probably going to be stationed in some menial capacity in the Marquis's family, for an orphan dependant on his bounty can

expect little else, my gratitude then shall lead me to obey with cheerfulness the commands of my benefactor; but the task of parting will I fear much grieve poor Giraldine, she is old, and I shall never perhaps see her more."

Lord Edwin now found it necessary to explain the mystery, by declaring himself the son of the Marquis, avowing his ardent love for her, and declaring she alone should ever share his happiness. "Why then so reluctant, sweet girl, more pleasing prospects shall unveil to your view, and the sunshine of prosperity shall shed its ray and renovate my beauteous blossom though transplanted from its native soil," and he kissed the tear that fell upon her hand.

Rosalie appeared much agitated: "Alas! that I am every way unworthy the honour your Lordship has conferred," said she, "I am perfectly convinced, retract then your vow, my Lord, and view only with the eyes of beneficent friendship the ill-fated cottager of Chamouny; ah! why was I doomed to be the sport of capricious fate, or create one moment's uneasiness to one whose superiority prevents my retaliation of affection, without incurring the censure such presumption would merit, and dared this erring heart reproach providence, 'twould murmur that relentless fate should have instigated your visit to this peaceful vale, where you will have plucked from

us the blooming rose of happiness, and left us only the thorns of regret. If I solicit to remain with this happy family, I fear I shall never enjoy the peace I once knew, for a continual dread of having offended my benefactor, and the idea of ingratitude to your Lordship would break my heart, yet persist not in accompanying me to the Abbey, after the strict injunctions the Marquis has enjoined Montague."

"Say not a word," replied Lord Edwin, "my plan is formed, and I am determined to execute it; go to Giraldine, who is apprised of your departure, take only one dress with you, for Montague has orders to furnish you with a genteel habiliment as soon as you arrive in England, and remember when we meet at the Abbey necessity will compel us to be strangers 'till the mystery of your parentage can be explained."

Thus ended the discourse, and Rosalie promising to observe discretion on her part, rushed to her chamber and threw herself across the bed, her bosom agitated by the contesting passions of love, gratitude, hope, and obedience; but time was swiftly passing, her stay would be short, and she determined dividing her cloaths equally between Madelon and Josephine, and she was going down in search of them when the miniature caught her attention, she took it down, and fastening it to her bosom, earnestly examined every feature.

"Would to heaven thou could speak," sighed she, "I should then be acquainted with my destiny; miserable girl that I am, thus to be ignorant of every circumstance relative to my family."

Again she would have indulged a moment's reflection, if the foot of Madelon had not roused her reverie; she opened the door, Madelon was in tears; she kissed the cheek of Rosalie, and wept on her shoulder:—"Thursday," sobbed she, "we lose our dear sister."

Rosalie endeavoured to pacify her assuring her, she would write as often as possible, for Montague had promised her a conveyance at least four times a year. "Ah! that will be poor consolation to me," replied Madelon, "but we must submit."

What a mixture of pain did these charming girls struggle to suppress, 'twas the real sorrow of separation. To Madelon and Josephine her cloaths were equally divided, a straggling ringlet was purloined by each as the treasured relic of a dear loved friend, a valued sister, her lute only was reserved to take to England, for that was too valuable to be parted with even to Madelon: Every thing being settled for their departure it was agreed Lord Edwin should proceed with the travellers the whole way, and as he spoke the Italian to perfection, and Rosalie also, he conceived

passing by the title of Signior Carlini and sister, he should elude all suspicion during their tour; he meant also to procure a veil at the first convenient situation, which Rosalie should keep closely drawn, and never take off, which being almost a usual custom in that country, would by no means appear a singularity.

CHAP. VII.

THE supper was prepared on the second evening, and the family assembled:—Giraldine sat gazing on, vacancy jogging her foot, and lost in thought; Reuben drew the cork of a choice bottle, the produce of his well-cultured vineyard, to revive their drooping spirits, but it would not do—no one's appetite served.

Madelon's hand rested on the shoulder of Rosalie, who was careffing with plaintive adieu the little Chamois, that rested in her lap, unconscious of the loss he too was going to sustain. Josephine, the innocent sprightly Josephine, was earnestly entreating to accompany them about three

miles over the mountains, but as the guide could not return with her, and Madelon was obliged to stay and console her mother; a prudent observation of Lord Edwin's, not to experience a second parting scene, repelled the wish, and it was no more repeated.

Montague to hide his feelings, and prevent joining in conversation, had taken his solitary seat at the door: The prattle of Josephine no longer enlivened him: Rosalie's spinning wheel ceased to turn: Madelon's little garden had not received its evening visitor's refreshing care, to renovate and tie up the drooping plants, and Giralbine's basket of knitting hung neglected on the branch of a rose-tree that encircled the casement.

Carlos musing on the thoughts of his separation from Marcella, in like manner was no very lively companion to Montague; as he was pensively lolling over the gate of the vineyard, contemplating the arrival of a group of peasantry, who were advancing in procession, but not one smile beamed on their countenance. They were come to take leave of Rosalie, each had brought some little pledge of esteem: A curious osier basket, a purse, a pair of mittens, a silk net for her hair, a variegated pincushion, a curious jar of the choicest honey, a few pomegranates, with various

other trifles according to the age and distinction of the donor.

Lord Edwin was enraptured to behold the unfeigned tear of real sincerity that dimmed the bright eyes of the female peasants for his beloved Rosalie—they chatted about half an hour and then took an affectionate farewell.

“The dust,” said Carlos, as he watched their departure, “won’t be very troublesome to-morrow, Montague, for methinks the plentiful showers that have fallen from the eyes of these faithful affectionate peasants will abate the inconvenience of our being blinded by it should the wind even rise, ’tis the first time, Montague, you or I ever witnessed such a scene, but as my Lord justly observes, this Vale abounds with rarities.”

“A similar shower may perhaps lave the flinty roads of Savoy,” replied Montague, “’ere Carlos returns to England, and recounts the drops that fell in Chamouny.”

The chord of sympathy was touched, and its vibration was strong and severe. “Montague’s raillery might amuse and cheer our hospitable friends within,” answered Carlos, “suppose we see if we can render ourselves serviceable?”

Montague assented, and they turned into the cottage where Rosalie was packing her presents in a small portmanteau, which,

with a basket of refreshment, was to be fastened on Carlos's mule. Again and again they took leave, and retired to rest, for the mules were to be saddled by six o'clock.

Sleep's magic fillet steeped in poppied essence, for the first time lost its power over the whole family. Not a soul closed their eyes Reuben and Giral dine talked the tedious night away ; Madelon and Josephine steeped their pillows in a briny bath, while Rosalie pretended sleep to prevent encouraging the painful ideas of separation, and Lord Edwin alone had retired with a light heart enraptured to have discovered the mine that concealed so inestimable a jewel, whose brilliancy would dazzle every beholder, when polished by emulation, and who would not envy him its possession.

They were all up by five, and again the parting tear fringed with gems the down-cast eyelids. The morning was serenely beautiful, and Rosalie as her dejected eyes wandered, for the last time, over the picturesque beauties that bounded her view, secretly thought the Vale of Chamouny had never before looked so beautiful : A small purse of Louis presented by Lord Edwin to Madelon and Josephine, and a liberal compliment from the Marquis by the hands of Montague, amply satisfied the careful guardians of this lovely pro-

tegee ; a short adieu was all Lord Edwin could permit, and the handkerchiefs of Madelon and Josephine were just discovered to wave in the breeze as Rosalie took a last look from the summit of the mountain.

CH A P. VIII.

AFTER the departure of Lord Edwin from the Castle, the Marquis, as was his usual custom, retired to his library—'twas much about the time Montague paid his annual visit to Chamouny, and a certain presentiment, instilled by apprehension, darted across his imagination. "Gone to France, and means to pass through Italy," exclaimed he as he shut the door, "Ah! heaven avert he should discover the concealment of Rosalie, but surely Edwin's disposition is not so romantic to search the obscure cottage to gratify his taste: No, no, the gallant and noble ancestry of his father will prevent my son from falling into the errors of commonality."

The Marquis's pride, which was ever his predominant characteristic, now reigned in full force, and ringing his bell with a degree of violence, he ordered Montague to attend. The faithful steward obeyed the summons: He was the chosen regulator of the Marquis's plans, and had lived in the family twenty-five years, he was now in his fifty-seventh year, beloved and respected by every one in the family, and gratitude and obedience to his superiors, gentleness and courtesy to his fellow servants had gained him the esteem he so justly merited; the most implicit confidence sealed his lip where necessity required, and the most noble sentiments of liberality and compassion flowed from the dictates of his honest heart; he was still active and diligent, though he was stealing through the autumnal vale of life to the winter of a happy old age.

"Shut the door," said the Marquis, "and sit down." Montague obeyed in silence.—

"My son is gone to Paris," resumed he, "and as it is near the time of your annual trip, I would have you instantly set off, I have a strange presage he should meet with Rosalie: 'Tis time, she should be brought to England, and as I am now her sole guardian, I shall place her at Thornley under the inspection of Lady Mentoria Edwin, he will by that means never see her before

his return from Italy, and by that time she will perhaps be disposed of, for you alarmed me when you said she exceeded your expectation in person, and manners, and that such was the general opinion of every body, and if Edwin should discover her in his tour through those mountains, who can tell the consequence.

"Good my Lord," cried Montague smiling, "don't raise imaginary evils, for should Lord Edwin meet with her, who is to unravel the mystery known now only to God and yourself?"

"Why true," answered the Marquis, "I did not reflect on that improbability; however, as the poor girl will be expecting you, set off on Thursday, Edwin, cannot reach that part of the world this fortnight, as he goes to Paris and makes some stay: Here," continued he, opening his escrutore, "is a sufficient sum to defray all expences."

"I wish," said Montague, "the sweet lady, her mother was alive." The Marquis's colour mantled on his cheek, and he fetched a deep sigh. "I can assure you," resumed Montague, "Miss Rosalie is far handsomer than her mother's picture." "Her mother's picture!" cried the Marquis, "how for God's sake should she come by it?" "Why Madam gave it to Giraldine for the child when she went to Montpelier," "I charge you then," said

the Marquis, "the moment you arrive, to demand it in my name, seal it instantly, and restore it safe and unseen by mortal eye to my hand; go, Montague, strictly obey this injunction, and return soon as possible." He promised to observe his directions, bowed, and withdrew.

The Marquis remained some time ruminating, and then entered the breakfast parlour, where Lady Adela and Lady Louisa were winding some cotton for their tambour, very much tangled: The Marquis smiled at their perplexity, "I am much in your situation, my dear girls," said he, "for I am about to unravel a delicate skein, mysteriously tangled."

Lady Louisa let fall her hand to listen to the Marquis's strange address, and the winding ceased. "What ænigma have you to puzzle us with, dear Sir," answered her lively Ladyship, "do give us the most easy clue to discover it, for really our patience is almost exhausted, with this troublesome skein."

"The mystery I am going to unfold, my children, is not yet arrived at the proper crisis of explanation, nor must you require it 'till time and opportunity permit me to disclose the important secret."

"The lovely sisters involuntarily looked at each other in amaze, Adela then pensively cast her eyes on the ground, and waited the procedure, while Lady Louisa

more susceptible, caught his hand, and fixing her fine eyes on his averted countenance, cried, "Pray dear Sir, relieve our suspense."

Expectation was on the wing, 'twas the moment of explanation, as the veil of secrecy gently devolved the mystery long consigned to the recess of faithful silence, a moment, elapsed, and the Marquis continued.

"I am going to introduce to your favour and protection a delicate plant, reared in an uncultivated soil, though sprung from a rich and fertile stem, which torn by the ruthless and capricious winds of fate, withered, drooped and died, leaving to the more favourable breeze of heaven the nurture of its sole-surviving blossom; the soil of Italy was destined to rear this desolated flower, and now luxuriance and perfection mark the opening beauties of this tender vale-nursed lily, I shall transplant it with assiduous care to the protection of my amiable daughters, cherished by their fostering hand, it will, I trust, repay, with grateful blossom, their watchful attention: Such is the plant I wish them to preserve, if fame with partial praise has not deceived me. Montague is commissioned to convey it safe to England, and if you find rusticity has veiled one charm, prune with discretion the impeding leaf, while as its rising beauty witnesses improvement,

a father's ardent love shall be the fond requital of your care."

He ceased, and the starting tear that glistened in his eye reflected back the chrystal pendant that impearled the cheeks of his attentive auditors, but Lady Louisa's dimpled smile banished the tear, 'twas the incense of exquisite sensibility from hearts whose monitor was humanity.

"I perfectly understand you, my dear Sir," said she, "and conceive the plant you have so sweetly and interestedly described, partakes the sensitive nature, if so, when committed to the charge of Adela and myself, it shall at least be exempt from the rude pressure of derisive insensibles, whose unfeeling curiosity might be tempted to censure where compassion should predominate."

"And after the inviolate secrecy which seals our father's lip," replied Lady Adela, "his daughters will ever prove themselves worthy the confidence reposed in them, by never seeking to explore the secret unpermitted, 'tis sufficient to us the lovely protegee is countenanced by a parent who has ever evinced himself the faithful friend of the unfortunate."

The Marquis pressed them to his bosom, and, relying on their discretion, informed them he was guardian to the lovely orphan, that a genteel fortune was left in his hands for her maintenance, and that he

wished every affection to be shewn her as the relic of a friend dearly revered, but to whom he had sworn never to reveal her birth or connexions 'till a convenient opportunity; he then wished them a good morning and withdrew.

His horse was soon after ordered, and he bowed to them as he crossed the lawn.—The charming sisters, left to their own reflection on this interesting subject, formed a thousand conjectures; Lady Adela wondered what friend's child it could be whose concerns required such strict secrecy. "I long to see her," said Lady Louisa; "I should like to know if she is handsome," continued she, adjusting her beautiful tresses through the folds of her muslin turban, while a spark of envy darted through her bosom at the idea of a rival, though her natural sweetness of temper would have forgiven such a superiority, even to her most inveterate enemy, yet the suggestion was very apt in the bosom of a young female.

Sir Henry Lansdowne's elegant phaeton and four greys, at that moment crossing the lawn, caught the eye of Lady Louisa, "Good heavens!" exclaimed she, "here is Sir Henry's greys entering the gate, how shall I escape, for positively he shall not see me en dishabille, for as he is most probably your swain, and I am on my preferment, it may mar my fortune, and I should

be sorry to interrupt so charming a tete-a-tete, so adieu, dear Adela." The window invitingly open to the garden was low, and Lady Louisa instantly leaped out and flew for refuge to a recess in the shrubbery.

Sir Henry enquiring for the fair fugitive, was told she was dressing; by the side of the window hung a beautiful landscape, just framed, which attracted his admiration, and he placed himself with his back to the light in order to view more accurately some beauty Lady Adela was pointing out, when turning to the window to enjoy the perfume of the geraniums that encircled it, he perceived a pale green slipper hanging on the branch of a rose bush, with a small fragment of muslin floating on the briar.

"Bless me," cried he, "the owner of this slipper has encountered the thorns, whether in search of the rose I can't say, but surely the fugitive, by leaving such evident traces had some particular object to pursue or elude, had both slippers remained, one might have concluded some lovely saint had commenced her pilgrimage to Loretto from this favoured spot, and left these trophies to announce her departure."

Lady Adela's cheek flushed crimson: To have discovered her sister's retreat would have offended her, and yet the em-

barrasted state in which she had so precipitately left her demanded it, to extricate her from the capability of raising a falsehood; Louisa's farcasm also of Sir Henry being her lover, had so much deranged her for the moment, she scarce knew how to receive him, and to be left tete-a-tete was a double mortification, for never had the slightest partiality been visible in his conduct to Lady Adela; on the contrary, she had regarded her sister as the object of his repeated visits, and whilst those ideas crowded her imagination she scarce knew what answer to make.

"If the slipper is yours," repeated he, "permit me to reach it." "Oh no," answered Lady Adela, "'tis Louisa's, pray let it remain," catching his sleeve as he stepped over the Dutchess. "As 'tis Lady Louisa's," said the delighted Landsdowne, "I will venture to restore it." Lady Adela's vexation increased, "Pray return, Sir Henry," cried she, "probably Sylvio may have stolen it from my sister's dressing-room, he is very mischievous." "Do you think he tore this transparent strip from her gown at the same time, if he did, he was an arch fellow to lay the blame on the thorns, and make them the apparent depredators of his ingenuity."

The fact was now too evident to be denied, and Lady Adela could only entreat him to return; "For heaven's sake, Sir

Henry," cried she, flying to the door, and well knowing Louisa could not be concealed far off, by the deprivation of her slipper, "Stay, at least 'till I have inquired if Andrew has removed the steel traps."

"O, I fear them not," replied Landdowne, bowing feebly, and perfectly seeing through this excellent stratagem of his fair suppliant, "traps of steel nor chains of iron don't prevent my discovering the retreat of this lovely fugitive, besides, as I have a presentiment she has just trodden the path before me, 'tis most probable from the silence which reigns she has escaped all such danger as your fears tend to magnify, or should she have fallen the victim of such a disaster, I will be the champion to extricate her, though a dragon guarded the shrubbery; yet don't attempt to follow 'till I have explored every avenue to ensure your safety." added he, with a sarcastic smile.

Lady Adela turned her head to conceal her too visible confusion, while Landdowne darting through the vista, was enclosed in the mazes of the shrubbery in an instant, and Lady Adela gravely returned to her seat.

In vain he peeped through every aperture, she was not to be found; at length turning a corner into a very romantic shade, called the wilderness, he caught the glimpse of her gown darting swiftly round

round the trees, and turning through the first path sprung through a thicket of Seringo's and caught the end of her sash, but his buckle unfortunately entangling, his sprightly prize slipped the knot which confined the persian to her waist, and leaving the trophy in his hand, reached the house before him, and flew to her dressing-room.

Lady Adela followed her with a flush of anger on her countenance; "Is your ridiculous scamper over?" said she to the breathless Louisa, who had thrown herself on a couch, "never again, sister, subject me to form frivolous excuses, and when your folly is discovered act in so childish a manner: What must Sir Henry think of your behaviour; half undressed, only one slipper, and flying without the least reason from a pursuit sure to overtake you; I have only to beg you'll adjust your dress and descend to apologize for your imprudence."

Lady Louisa, who tenderly loved her sister, felt the force of this conversation most poignant, a reproach from Adela was a wound to her heart. "I have been guilty of a weakness," said she, "but the intention was a harmless frolic;" and as she passed the glass the conviction of her error from the appearance of her robe brought an involuntary tear in her eye: Adela's admonition was kind, thought she,

as she descended the stairs, and I will for the future suppress my volatile spirits.

Agitated and vexed she gently opened the door, Lady Adela nodded a smile of approbation, and Sir Henry placed her on the sofa: "Had Lady Louisa attempted her agility in running for the celebrated apple, she had surely vanquished the swift footed Atalanta, and obtained the prize."

Lady Louisa blushed: "Which of us do you think was most to blame," cried she, "me for flying you in this ridiculous race, or you for pursuing me when you must naturally suppose I had my reason for absenting myself, and I did not conceive my sister's attractions so few as not to be able to render you any amusement during my absence, and I honestly declare my flight was the whim of the moment to elude curiosity, how then could I imagine the polite Sir Henry would have intruded on my retirement, by boldly insisting on forcing me to discover myself when it was not agreeable."

Sir Henry stung with the severity of this last word, repelled as much as possible the fiery glance that darted in his eye. "To err is human," replied he, "to forgive divine; and as I now appeal to a divinity, whose characteristic is compassion and benevolence, thus let a suppliant sue for pardon," gracefully dropping on one knee, and presenting the fash and slipper: "The

ardent desire of having one peep at so charming a fugitive, whom I had never consciously offended, induced me to explore your retreat, one fascinating smile seals my pardon, and Lansdowne vows never to intrude again 'till the benignant eye of Lady Louisa marks his fond wish, and permits him so great an indulgence."

"Sir Henry's elegant apology has sufficiently atoned for his frolic, and Louisa trusts forgiveness beams as sincerely in her eye as it expands in her heart." An eloquent look at that moment confirmed the reality of her address, yet it conveyed to the bosom of Lansdowne an idea not easily forgotten, for Sir Henry's partiality had long subsisted, and he waited only to be assured his hopes were not founded on a baseless fabric; thus the information he wished to obtain he conceived the eloquent eyes of Lady Louisa had powerfully expressed: That she entertained a respectful esteem was all he could at present flatter himself with, and as he well knew she possessed every social virtue, he did not doubt but in time sympathy would raise the spirit of friendship to the exalted and fervent passion of love, for every perfection, in his opinion, centered in this paragon of excellence, and if an error ever blazed in her conduct, it could only be imputed to a peculiar flow of good spirits, the incense of a heart which knew no guile, and a

quick sensibility and imagination unrestricted by prudery or affectation: She was youthful, innocent and gay, her heart had never known a pang of real sorrow, every hour had glided on the wing of happiness, nor had she ever been tempted to pluck the rose of love, consequently its thorns had never wounded her bosom.

CHAP. IX.

THE rest of the morning passed in chat 'till the Marquis's return, who pleased with his visitor, begged he would stay dinner, for Sir Henry, as the son of his most favourite youthful companion, who trod with him in childhood the paths of learning, always found a hearty invitation at the castle: "About a fortnight hence," said the Marquis, "is the united birth-day of my daughters, which I intend to celebrate with all possible festivity; the neighbouring nobility and gentry will have general invitations, and the peasantry shall enjoy every harmony and pleasure their

hearts can wish ; I intend to form a fete champetre, and your presence will add to our felicity."

The high blood that flowed in the Marquis's veins had ever panted for an alliance with this noble youth, and he flattered himself one of his daughters might be able to captivate, in his opinion, so glorious a prize. The ample estate of Sir Henry, the elegant education he had received, and improved to every advantage ; the virtue of his ancestors shining in every action, and flowing in every sentence, had so inflated the pride of the Marquis, that every hope rested on this favourite scheme.

Every elegance was preparing at the castle, and the most sumptuous luxuries procuring ; every belle in the vicinity was racking her invention to appear the most attractive object, and not a domestic but equally enjoyed the delightful anticipation of the approaching festival, and even the old gardener, whose venerable locks straggled in silvery threads on his wrinkled temples, was half persuaded to suffer his niece Agnes, who was waiting maid to Lady Adela, to have them fastened with a new black ribbon, and wear a little powder on the occasion, but in vain did she endeavour to rally and tell him he would look so young he should be her partner on the lawn.

"Don't teaze me Agnes," said he, "you nor any other female shall ever have the honour of decking my head."

Agnes smiled for the moment at his shrewd reply, yet as she recollected her worthy uncle had once loved and met a severe disappointment, she pitied him, from her soul, as she was well convinced his attachment to single life had not arisen from a froward disposition, or an absolute aversion to the sex in general, a sigh sacred to his sorrows escaped her, and Andrew perhaps at that moment felt a similar sensation, as he walked slow and pensively out of the servants hall.

"Well, I never liked old bachelors," said the little thin housekeeper, drawing up her head and smoothing her apron, "but I must say Andrew is the best tempered creature I ever lived with in my life, yet, as I often tell him, his generosity outruns his pocket, poor good soul."

At this last ejaculation, uttered with a deep sigh, Agnes raised her eyes and fixed them on Mrs. Gertrude's little grey orbs, peeping over the dark circles of an ancient pair of green-glass spectacles.

"Was you ever in love?" asked the facetious Agnes, "or do you ever mean to marry?"

"What is past," cried the little notable dame, "bears no very pleasing retrospect, and what's to come one must be more than mortal to devise."

"Why I can tell you," answered Agnes, determined to enjoy her frolic, and assuming the predelictive air of a fortune-teller, earnestly gazed on the palm of her hand—"What's to come is, Andrew—"

Gertrude started and withdrew her hand, half angry, yet half determined to forgive: "What of him for God's sake."

"Nay," replied Agnes, having slyly observed Andrew crossing the lawn with a basket of fruit, "what would you wish more than a present of some peaches this morning, which I prophesy will arrive in a few minutes for your acceptance."

Poor Gertrude, who had placed a different construction on the first hopeful words uttered by the mischief-loving Agnes, scarce knew how to extricate herself from the censure her agitation had incurred, and therefore thought it most proper to trip out of the room, and leave Agnes to receive the peaches and bearer; for although she conceived herself much past her prime, there was a degree of pleasure in knowing herself esteemed by so worthy a man as Andrew she could not forego.

"Love indeed," muttered she to herself as she trotted up stairs, "I should be an old fool to be in love now a-days; to be sure I have a great regard for Andrew, but I dare say he never had the least thoughts of me more than civility."

Thus argued Gertrude, yet she half wished to persuade herself Andrew's opinion might be different to her conjecture, and as she crossed the looking glass vanity tapped her on the shoulder, and turning her head she conceived a pin was still wanting to adjust her ribbon which probably had never been thought of if Agnes's bewitching conversation had not instilled the idea of attraction, but the bell ringing terminated her reflection, and she briskly descended to obey its summons.

The Marquis had as yet received but one letter from his son, and that arrived before he left Dover, and his silence was a mystery he could not explain. "'Tis probable his friends engross so much of his time," thought he, "that every hour not dedicated to them is devoted to refreshing slumber, to recover him from the excesses of dissipation; yet methinks he might have stole half an hour to gratify me, by hearing of his welfare; however, I trust as pleasure is his pursuit, prudence will conduct him safe."

The day following brought him a second letter, expressing Lord Edwin had changed his route, and had proceeded to Italy.

Had a spectre, the most horrible imagination could depict, presented itself at that moment, it could not have produced a greater agitation than the Marquis experi-

enced—every nerve vibrated, every feature was marked with ghastly astonishment—the very project he wished to stifle in embryo had burst forth, and presented the most formidable picture of vexation, tinged with the highest colouring the power of imagination could shade. Yet Montague's late conversation darted a ray of comfort and composed his irritable mind.

When he met the ladies he slightly mentioned the subject, by saying Edwin was by this time in Italy. "Probably," said the lively Lady Louisa, "he may chance to meet our little Chamouny cottager."

The Marquis shrunk with apprehension; "If he does," answered he unguardedly, "What impression could a peasant make on him?"

"Impression!" repeated the lively Louisa, "Why, suppose I was a handsome peasant-girl, and you a Marquis, a slight impression of the lip might be no great degradation, and as Edwin loves to contemplate beauty, such a circumstance might occur."

Rage tinged the Marquis's cheek: "Ridiculous!" cried he, "Do you suppose the girl would suffer such an insult, or Montague permit it?"

"Well," said Lady Adela, "I cannot think a cottager would conceive it an insult; and as to Montague's prevention, what are the remonstrances of an old man

to the absolute determinations of a young one, to whom obedience and respect demanded his silence."

The sting of an asp had not more severely wounded the bosom, than this applicable speech had the peace of the Marquis.

"I trust," said he, recovering his chagrin, "Rosalie has too much good sense ever to make me suspect her of such an imprudence, much more that ocular demonstration should convince me the suggestion was become a reality; she is now chaste as the un sullied snow that crowns her native mountains, and it shall be my care too warm a sun does not dissolve and contaminate that purity it now so eminently possesses."

"If I should ever feel myself disposed to be in love," said the arch Louisa, "I'd take a trip to Lapland, and bring home my heart so thoroughly chilled and cased with an impenetrable shield of ice, that should repel and defy the meridian beams of India's burning sun to dissolve it."

"Time will convince us, Louisa," returned the Marquis, "your intrepidity of being held captive, liberty is your motto, and a chain even of gold, would be to you a galling fetter; but let us take a turn through the grounds, I want your genius and advice in the disposal of some ornaments in the grotto."

CHAP. X.

IT only wanted two days of the fete, and the elegant arrangements of every device exhibited the taste of the ladies; innumerable fancies decorated every part of the castle: Sir Henry Lansdowne, and his friend, Lord Carlton, soon after arrived in the Baronet's elegant phaeton, and beautiful greys, followed by two smart little lads in scarlet jackets and velvet caps, which rendered the equipage an interesting and charming object from the windows, but, alas! the ladies were not there to admire them as they dashed over the lawn.

Lord Carlton's manly features lost their usual pensoroso on his arrival at the castle: He was the darling son of an Irish nobleman, well educated, possessing an ample fortune, and inferior to few in gentility of deportment, elegance of address, or amiability of disposition, but when compared to the lively and spirited Sir Henry, he was justly and frequently stiled the virtuous and benignant Mentor; and was his

friend's superior in age, about two years, but the contrast of their dispositions entitled them to the difference of ten.

The elegant Lady Adela and fascinating Louisa, were strolling on the arm of the Marquis, in a distant avenue of the shrubbery, when Sir Henry and Lord Carlton advanced to meet them.

They were dressed in their morning muslin robes, their hair wildly disordered by the wind, waved on their shoulders in irregular luxuriance, while the beams of the sun cast a pleasing reflection on their beautiful features, through the texture of small chip hats negligently fastened with a plain ribbon; on the arm of Lady Louisa hung a basket of flowers just selected from the green-house, while the delicate fingers of Lady Adela twined through the wires of a small cage that imprisoned an exquisite Virginia nightingale, which she was removing from a too sultry situation in a portico of oranges, where its enchanting song delighted every listening ear.

Lord Carlton held the arm of his friend: "One moment's pause, Lansdowne," cried he, "to contemplate the most charming group I ever beheld; are those the divinities I am to be introduced to? And which is the lovely goddess at whose shrine you worship? What elegance and beauty! Methinks had there been one more, my fancy had not unjustly conceived the graces

had strolled to this charming spot ; that little floral deity seems to tread on air, as if her magic feet would scorn to crush the blossoms that invade her path, while the majestic and graceful carriage of the other presents one with the expressive resemblance of the dignified Minerva, each reclined on the arm of a venerable and benignant sage, who seems dispensing smiles and happiness, blended no doubt with some precept of instruction, as appears by his pointed finger and earnest conversation."

"Why, Carlton, you are quite in heroics this morning," answered Sir Henry, "but recollect you are to sacrifice only at the shrine of Minerva, for that angelic Hebe, Flora, Thalia, or what you please to call her, is alone dedicated to wing each hour with rosy bliss for Lansdowne's future days, but they approach and you shall judge farther."

"My friend, Lord Carlton, Sir," continued he, presenting him to the Marquis, "of whom impartially conversing, your goodness permitted me to introduce."

The Marquis cordially extended his hand, and politely welcomed him to the castle, while a glow of confusion embarrassed the ladies at the surprise of so unexpected a visitor.

Carlton ventured a glance at the forbidden fruit, thought its temptation delicious, and immediately fixed his eyes on the se-

rene features of Lady Adela, offering to convey the cage into the house, a politeness acknowledged by a graceful compliment quite her own.

"Sweet prisoner," cried he, admiring his beautiful plumage, "captivity with thee must lose its rigours, the attention of thy lovely mistress surely repays thy loss of liberty; fed by her gentle hand, and courted by her dulcet voice to warble thy sweet note, who would not envy thee, gay songstress?"

Lady Adela smiled. "His native clime had surely yet more charms, my Lord, where liberty, delightful liberty, was all his own, when at the evening hour he sweetly poured his plaintive melody, to hail his mate within the well known grove, but now captivity desires those joys the little solitaire softly diversifies his notes with tender thrilling strains, which oft' to fancy's ear seems to repeat some mournful plaint of separated love."

Carlton was delighted with the sweet beam of compassion that animated her countenance, each sentiment seemed so congenial to his own, and her soft and pleasing address rendered her the more captivating object of his esteem, whilst in the conversation of Lady Louisa he conceived he could distinguish a predominance of levity, though biassed by extreme politeness and affability: Such were the impartial

ideas he formed of each, and Lord Carlton's opinion seldom deviated from the most favourable yet real points of true discernment.

The most pleasing converse beguiled that day, and on the third the natal morn was ushered in by the five twinkling bells from the steeple of the romantic church about half a mile distant. A public breakfast in the Park commenced the fete, and the company assembled in elegant dishabille, numerous tables were spread under the shade of some venerable majestically-towering elms, while a band of music artfully concealed amid the luxuriance of a portico of oranges and odoriferous shrubs, at once delighted and surprised; profuse refreshments and delicacies furnished a superb dejeuner, and the repast ended at two o'clock, when an elegant gondola with flags, bearing the Marquis's arms, decorated with several emblematic devices, and cushions of pale blue satin covered the seats to receive the delightful group, who chose to enjoy the refreshing breezes, under an awning on the spacious canal, to the soft notes of the enchanting horn.

Others, whom timidity prevented joining the aquatic group, repaired to a turkish marquee, purposely erected for an accommodative shade to the ladies, as spectators of a select company of gentlemen, who were to exert their skill in archery to

obtain the silver arrow, and the rich bugle horn, prizes bestowed on the conqueror by the lovely directresses of the amusement.

The tent was composed of buff and green sattin in broad stripes, looped at the entrance by large tassels of silver, and festoons of bullion fringe; on the top was placed a superb sun of variegated luminous colours, that kept in perpetual motion, and produced a beautiful effect; sofas of correspondent sattin were placed on the inside, whilst various ensigns of archery suspended on falls of white sattin that lined the marquee. Sir Henry proved the fortunate claimant of the bugle horn, and the fair hands of Lady Louisa invested him with his trophy.

While the silver arrow was next adjudged to the Honourable Frederic Waldegrave, a resident in the vicinity of the castle, an orphan, of noble ancestry, just returned from a short trip to his paternal seat, about five miles distant. He was polite, amiable, and engaging, his countenance pleasing, his conversation interesting, nineteen summers only had bloomed upon his brow, and as a young man totally left to follow the bent of his own inclination at that early period of life, could it be wondered if, distant from the restrictions of a morose guardian, his naturally lively disposition sometimes led him into

error, yet very few had yet blazed in his conduct; instinctively inclined to cultivate a capacious, fertile and rising genius; his penetrating dark eyes beamed with delight, while his luxuriant hair of rich brown flowed on his well turned shoulders, as yet unconfined by the regulation of fashion, no ribbon confined it, no powder sullied its gloss: His jacket was composed of green sattin, his waistcoat buff, his hat black sattin, looped in front with a superb brilliant, and a green feather, rendered him the superior object of general admiration, for dignity, affability, and grace seemed to have combined their powers to complete the perfection of this noble youth.

As he advanced to receive his reward, he dropped gracefully on one knee, and kissing the fair hand that bestowed the arrow, placed it in the front of his sash.

Lady Louisa, who sometimes amused herself with drawing the bow, chose to preside over the archers' party, whilst Lady Adela, in compliment to the rest of the assemblage, took her seat in the gondola.

The dresses of the lovely sisters were exactly alike: loose Grecian robes of transparent French lawn over farsenet petticoats, the waist and sleeves clasped with bands of pearls, and their beautiful tresses shaded only by a veil of the same texture, thrown gracefully back and fastened with

a lily of pearls, while the lower fall descended to the waist and joined the cestus. The simplicity and becomingness of this elegant dishabille is scarcely conceivable, and the sublimity of their countenances heightened by their charming blushes created by the encomiums of the company, very aptly entitled them to the Duchess of Montreville's remark, who observed, they resembled the express character of vestal virgins, both from their real dispositions and negligently-graceful dress.

Two hours thus devoted completed the morning amusement, and the company retired to dress for the masked ball in the evening. The grand drawing-room was hung on the occasion with white sattin, over which in various forms suspended wreaths of roses, while columns of variegated foils entwined with oak leaves and golden wheat divided the compartments: Three superb chandeliers of different colours, representing emeralds, rubies, topazes, amethysts, &c. gave a most beautiful appearance; they were supported by enameled doves, suspended with chains from a rich painted ceiling; the sofas, duchesses and chairs were covered with white sattin fringed with silver, and in various parts of the room were disposed golden eagles supporting on their backs delicate fillagree pedestals, on which were placed the most curious exotics, while small in-

cense vases of fragrant aromatics blazed their magic flame on the chimney pieces, whose exquisite and matchless petrifications formed a most beautiful spectacle.

On a portion of the lawn was erected a platform for the dancers, should the evening prove fine, and beautiful Luna in compliment shed her most refulgent beam to invite the harmonious and sprightly group: innumerable lamps were suspended and encircled the trees, which almost uniting at the top formed a vernal canopy, intercepted through the waving branches by contrasting moon-light: To complete the picturesque sylvan scene, a band of music stationed in a distant pavilion, and the beautifully illuminated grotto immediately opposite across the lake, furnished an interesting object of admiration to the dancers, for the reflecting mirrors, burnished fossils, shells and brilliants, gave to fancy the idea of enchantment, while irregularly flowing down a craggy flight of marble steps a murmuring cascade broke its passage from the mossy carpet of the grotto to the lake, where the trembling moon-light clearly distinguished its circling form in rapid descent, concordantly joining its murmur to the inspiring notes of the distant horn.

Sir Henry supported the character of a pilgrim—Lord Carlton a magician—the Hon. Frederic Waldegrave, as cupid, with an elegant bow and arrows tipped with gold,

which he dexterously directed to every youthful female, while to the married ladies he distributed fetters of roses, which he assured them "were thornless." One arrow only missed its aim, it was levelled at an elegant nun, her foot stepped on it, and its texture being light and brittle, it snapped, and disconcerted the fly archer.

"I never refuse an enemy," cried the Religieuse; "although no enchantress, I possess a spell more powerful than your arrow, gentle Cupid, 'tis a heart defying thy magic, because every recess is guarded by reason, thy most dreaded foe; take thy aim amid the circles of gallantry, for my devoted sisterhood shrink from thee, vain boy, and every thought soars superior to thy influence." Cupid obediently drew the silken bandage across his eyes, and mingled with the group.

A flower-girl next addressed the magician, to explain her fortune: "Beauty," answered he, "fades like the blossoms in thy basket, cast them away and select others, among which choose the aloe, to watch its bloom will teach thee patience; add the blossoms of time, and place next them the rose of happiness, carefully dividing the thorn from the heart's-ease, mingle the evergreens of truth and fidelity, and present the selection to the most generous purchaser." Promising to observe his advice, she tripped away.

A beautiful figure of Hope courted universal admiration, who proved to be Lady Adela. "Wilt thou, sweet maid, by thy magic inspiration, deign to lighten my burthen?" asked Cupid. "Apply to prudence to fledge your arrows, and beg constancy to steep them in her purest essence, and my best exertion shall effectually crown your wishes," answered she.

The pilgrim next addressed her. "Whither are you wandering barefoot?" asked the elegant enchantress, leaning in pensive attitude on a superb anchor, "Do you prefer the thorny paths of superstition? or do you only affect to deceive us in your pretended pilgrimage? Change your route if bound to Loretto, believe me you will not find green slippers on every rose-bush to ease your feet as you travel on." "Oh, I'll compound for a few thorns," answered he, "provided the path does not conceal steel traps." A significant pressure of her hand convinced her the compliment was returned in the very reality of *jeu d'esprit*.

As he glided away, Lady Louisa's appearance, as the goddess of fortune with her splendid wheel, drew the whole assembly's admiration, and her dulcet voice instantly claimed attention. "I have selected a few prizes," said she, "the keep-sakes of hope and fortune, which I shall distribute as chance directs, the humble memorials of this day."

A sultana advanced and the fickle deity presented the wheel, from which she drew a card, which adjudged her the embroidered handkerchief; a general congratulation was whispered round on the applicable prize, but as prudence and modesty sealed the lip of the donor, animadversion ceased. Numerous elegant bagatelles were distributed among the motley group, and each party, highly delighted with the polite remembrance, treasured the little gift as an estimable memorial of friendship and respect.

At one the dancing ceased, when sumptuous tables, provided with every luxury the season produced, were spread in the grand saloon, where the Marquis presided, the most convivial and delighted spectator of the whole party: At the hour of three the company retired, and the inmates of the castle stole to the pillow of Morpheus.

The utmost decorum had been observed by the domestics and peasantry, who had equally enjoyed the evening by dancing on the back lawn, to the enlivening pipe and tabor, where Mrs. Gertrude condescended to lead down the first dance with Andrew, to the no small diversion of Wilson and the Marquis's valet.

CHAP. XL

LORD EDWIN and his lovely protegee pursued their journey over the mountains and environs for several days, 'till they reached the cottage of Marcella, where they rested and partook some humble refreshment, while Carlos again repeated his faithful adieus.

The spot that surrounded the cottage was romantically beautiful; from the protruding sides of the mountains depended clusters of the purple vintage in rich festoons, while in various parts of the acclivity the traces of the plough divided the velvet slopes, between whose chasms lofty waterfalls in diamond showers spangled the obtruding shrubs and flowers with its radiant crystals, as morn in saffron vesture tinted with her reflected orient beam the waving pines, that clad the mountain steep.

Marcella bade a thousand adieus as she wiped the intruding tear on the corner of her apron; her spinning was placed at the

door, and as the mules slowly paced on she took her seat, her head rested on the arm that supported the inactive spindle, while her eyes were fixed on the lessening objects, and the hand that lay in her lap still held the little gold cross, the treasured keep-sake of her lover, consecrated with the heart-sprung tears that laved its burnished sides.

Rosalie involuntarily looked back a few paces distance; Carlos was transfixed to his mule a statue of despair, gazing a last look with an extended hand that meant to wave, but the impulse of activity was suspended and the useless limb dropped by his side.

"Poor fellow," said Rosalie, her fine eyes absorbed in the tear of sensibility, "these are unfeigned sorrows of the heart."

"I pity them from my soul," added the benignant Lord Edwin, "Carlos in general possesses great fortitude, yet I find he is not proof to the innovations of love."

No particular circumstance occurred worthy observation 'till they arrived at Dieppe, where Carlos humbly petitioned to bestow his nite by a young female mendicant, instinctively stopped to listen to the voice of distress, while Mademoiselle Rosalie and his Lordship were taking lemonade vis-a-vis in a small room from whence they could observe his motion.

“ Ah, the poor unfortunate,” said Carlos searching his pocket for a few sous, very willingly drawn, while she presented a small basket of tooth-picks, “ Le Souvenir,” said Carlos, modestly taking one, “ I shall take this trifle to England, and when I look on it I shall be reminded of Janette: But I will not seek to explore sorrows it is not in my power to alleviate—Adieu then, the tear that in spite of every effort to retain it bedews my cheek, is the incense of a heart that has nothing more to give, yet 'tis consecrated to the child of misery.”

Jannette's tear mingled her thanks as she walked pensively on, and Carlos with folded arms stood contemplating her neat figure, and wasted a sigh to her sorrows 'till the voice of Lord Edwin tendering him a few Louis roused him, and he lightly skipped after Jannette, and chucking them into her basket pointed to his Lordship and returned.

Jannette curtsied low three times, and tying her little fortune up in a small leather purse, looked earnestly at it, clasped her hands, and raised her eyes in silent ejaculation to heaven for the unexpected bounty of the benevolent strangers, put it in her pocket, wiped another tear, yet another still succeeded, 'twas the drop of sincere gratitude, it would intrude—the feelings of nature were not to be commanded, and the tooth-pick girl possessed them refined.

only by the hand that planted, not nurtured them, yet were they eminently imitative, and her expressive eyes had repeated the whole history of her misfortunes to Carlos, without one syllable escaping her lips; eloquent revealers, beaming the impartial truth, though often pressed by bashful modesty to conceal the unpitied sorrows they relate, yet sweet compassion marks the timid glance, and joys to cheer the sad dejected eye long wandering o'er the gloomy chequered landscape shaded by tempestuous clouds of human life.

The packet in which the travellers were to sail for England was very full, and Rosalie drew her veil close over her face, while Lord Edwin wrapped himself in a large cloak, and permitted his fine dark hair to shade his countenance, as a disguise more favourable to his stratagem, and which so much altered his features as to elude the resemblance he formerly bore the family, and as Signior Carlini and La Bella Rosara his sister, they took their seats in the cabin.

Rosalie soon found the motion of the boisterous wave agitate her stomach, and she fainted on the shoulder of Lord Edwin: This indisposition so alarmed him, he had nearly thrown off his disguise to assist her, and bearing her in his arms on deck for the benefit of air, blundered over a young buck who impeded the passage.

and unfortunately trod on the gouty foot of an old morose bachelor, which compliment was returned by a hearty oath and a violent thrust. "Manners, you brute; have you no compassion you frisking Italian devil?" exclaimed he, limping into the cabin.

Lord Edwin enraged at this invective, now thought proper to address him in the English language, and in fact to procure some assistance for the lovely burthen now senseless in his arms. "I shall teach you manners, friend," cried he, "when I come down again, at present I am too much engaged in the charge of my sister."

"Sister!" exclaimed the buck sarcastically sneering, "A mighty polite brother, methinks if he possessed a little more manners for strangers it would better become him; Oh, 'tis an absolute bore to be treated thus, my hair, my coat, my neckcloth bear testimony of the savage's ferocity."

These last words echoing in the ear of a stiff-starched little old maid, instantly made her bustle up. "Mercy defend us, a boar in the packet did you say, Sir? Gracious God! the fierce creature may tear us all to pieces, I hope he is chained; I would not have come for the world if I had known it."

"Oh you need not be alarmed," replied the buck, taking her brown shrivelled arm

and feating her again, "it is only a two legged savage, that has caused this confusion, by stumbling over half a dozen of us with his prey in his paw."

"A savage with his prey?" reiterated the prim virgin, whose stupidity could not understand his rhodomontade, "what is it any thing like a monkey?"

"Oh yes!" returned he, enjoying the joke at her expence, while her features stiffened with terror, "It certainly is of that *specie*, though it files itself a man; in short, to calm your fears, Madam, 'tis the famous Signior, who has just left the cabin: I am sure if my sister, like his, had shammed dead, I should not have thought proper to clamber up with her weight at the danger of my own legs, and crush half a dozen others.

"Aye, aye, you are right," cried old square toes, "self preservation is the first law of nature, I never risked my precious limbs gadding after a parcel of pert toads, not I, fal-lal dangling nonsense."

By this time the antiquated Miss had drawn a small case bottle from her pocket, declaring her stomach, in consequence of the flurry she had just experienced, to be rather qualmish, and strongly recommended the old gentleman to taste it, assuring him it was very fine and unadulterated.

"It may, Madam," replied he, "but I am no dram drinker, however I thank you for your offer."

The little dame reddened with vexation, the odium of a dram drinker had not escaped her notice. "Old churl," muttered she, applying it to her lips, and swallowing a small but usual portion, again consigned it to the bottom of her long pocket.

Lord Edwin had now left Montague and Carlos to attend Rosalie, as she preferred sitting on deck, while he descended in search of the two choleric gentlemen he had so unintentionally offended.

"I hope your sister is better, Signior," asked the buck, with the most sarcastic effrontery.

Lord Edwin surveyed him from head to foot with an air of the most sovereign contempt, and then passed on to the old codger, "I am come to apologize as a gentleman to you, Sir, if in the hurry of conveying my sister up I was so unfortunate to do you an injury, but you must excuse me if I add, the hasty and ill-mannerly retaliated thrust and oath ill became a person of your years, and which perhaps makes me draw a conclusion of your birth and education probably unjust, but for which you must thank yourself; for the accident I readily apologize, and I hope, as my senior, you will be induced politely to pardon, and acknowledge the ungentleman-like expressions you made use of were the result of a moment's passion, urged by an

unlucky pressure of your lame foot, which I am sorry should have felt an additional pang from me."

"As for you, Sir," added he, turning to the young man, "I conceive far too contemptible a person to converse with, a mere composition of malice, foppery, and ignorance, quite beneath the notice of a gentleman."

To this address the pitiful spark thought fit to make no other reply than a sarcastic smile, and humming a tune, marched out of the cabin, secretly mortified at betraying his folly; while the old gentleman finding Montague and Carlos descending to receive the Signior's orders, began to think his companion of more consequence than he at first suspected, and therefore extended his hand in token of forgiveness, which Lord Edwin's placid benignity accepted, and animosity ceased on all sides.

His curiosity being roused, the old gentleman determined to try what he could make of the servants, as he had an inconceivable partiality to high connexion, being a rich but miserly Don; he therefore watched the Signior's absence to accomplish his scheme, and first addressed Montague with inquiring where his master and mistress were going.

"To England of course," replied the cautious domestic.

"Ah pray, friend, where might they last come from?"

"Paris," answered Montague, conning over the news-paper.

"Humph!" cried the old man, "that I knew before, but tell me if they are brother and sister; whether people of consequence, fortune, or note in the gay world, and where they reside in England; come let's hear, let's enjoy half an hour's chat over a tiff of punch."

"Excuse me, Sir," said Montague, "I have not lived in the Signior's family twenty-five years, to turn tatler in my old age, and evince myself unworthy the confidence ever reposed in me, and which I have faithfully supported."

"Nay," cried the other, redenning with passion at the baulk of his project, "there's no harm in a civil question, it must be a matter of indifference to me to know who your master is, and if I had not taken a liking to him, I should not have troubled my head about him, pray is he married?"

Montague uttered his favourite monosyllable, and the disappointed enquirer walked away. Passing the door of the lower cabin he espied Carlos, "I hope your Lady's better," said the intruder, taking a seat, "and your master too seems a mighty affable pleasant companion, and a warm one too I dare say."

"Why yes," answered Carlos, seeing the drift of his impertinent curiosity, "few men more so; 'tis warmish weather in our country."

"Aye you fly rogue," cried he, tapping his shoulder, and sagaciously winking, "I mean warm in the pocket."

"Perfectly so, and in every other respect," rejoined Carlos, "for generosity warms his hand, friendship his heart, virtue and gratitude his soul, while compassion blazes in his eye for every child of misfortune, and the cottage that shelters the victim of poverty feels the warmth of his beneficence in the blaze of the cheering faggots that form his little fire."

By every artful kind of stratagem did the old gentleman strive to obtain the wished intelligence, but Carlos's ingenuity evaded every possible discovery, and he left him to his own contemplation."

Finding himself baffled and derided, he again ventured to the cabin, where he consoled himself with smoaking a pipe, to the annoyance of several females, whose coughs and whisper were little noticed by him, self comfort being his only consideration.

A plump dame surrounded by three shuffling boys, complained loudly of the offensive tobacco. "Bobby will certainly be sick," cried she, hugging up a rosy cheeked chub, the express image of herself, "you must either go a top of the deck, Sir,

or I insist the window shall be open, for we shall be poisoned and stifled alive, as bad thof we were stuffed in the black-hole at *Calcoretta* what d'ye callum place, I shall be a fine figure by the time I gets to *Bright-hampsted*; this is my last clean apron, and it looks rare and *smudgey*, beside we shall smell like pole-cats; God bless Bobby, he's sick as death."

"If Bobby had stuffed less cold goose just now, his stomach would have been in a better state to bear these wholesome fumes," cried the old gentleman, "so a natural cascade won't do him much harm, pop him upon deck he'll do very well."

"Who asked your advice, 'squire Nettletop?" returned she, clawing up the boy on one hip and waddling out of the cabin.

"Lord Edwin and Rosalie were seated on deck, praying for the hour that would discover the long expected shore, and free them from the disgusting party they had avoided associating with; the passage was tedious, the wind contrary, but in six hours after they safely landed at Brighton, where the old gentleman taking his seat in the diligence for London, unwillingly quitted the Signior without the least clue of ever seeing him again.

Lord Edwin was now obliged to leave his fair charge, after passing two days, and the third morning Rosalie was to proceed

to the castle. Lord Edwin had ordered a muslin jacket to be made for her on their arrival, and also a straw hat, plainly ornamented with a violet ribbon; habited in this neat and simple dress confined by a sash of the same colour with her hat, innumerable ringlets of the glossiest hue shading her soft blue eyes, and the rose of health blooming on her cheek, she entered the room.

Lord Edwin surveyed her with delight. "Enchanting girl," thought he, "how will my father fix his eyes on that sweet angelic countenance, that graceful form, and soft bewitching smile, mingled with hope and fear, as the door opens to receive the humble trembling stranger, a thousand adieu's trembled on each lip as the chaise drove off, and Lord Edwin, after watching the speedy vehicle out of sight, returned to his parlour with a dejected eye and heavy heart 'till the packet failed in the evening, in which he took his solitary seat on his way to Paris, where he amused himself in writing, but as the lovely form of Rosalie, continually before his eyes, banished every other idea, his rapturous pen involuntarily obeyed the dictates of his heart, and traced the following lines.

ON ROSALIE.

Pure are her virtues as th' unfully'd snows,
Fraught with effervent love her bosom glows;
Celestial softness beaming from her eye,
Spontaneous eloquence expands each sigh:
While balmy sweetness from her lip distils,
Her voice with melody harmonious thrills:
Softer than lyric strains Apollo sung,
Each heav'nly accent lingers on her tongue:
When she appears the rose forgets to bloom,
The lily droops nor sheds its gay perfume:
And when the sprightly dance she blithly leads,
The choice of Paris in her favour pleads;
Peace, happiness, and love, before her bend,
Virtue's own offspring and the muses friend.
When Heaven's harbinger shall claim his prize,
And waft her purest soul to purer skies,
Then shall recording annals trace her fame,
And pity weep when mem'ry breathes her name.

C H A P. XII.

MONTAGUE had been ordered by the Marquis to apprise him of their arrival at Brighton, which injunction being punctually obeyed, the family were anxiously

awaiting the appointed hour — the morning had passed and the traveller not arrived. The Marquis strolled with his daughters to a pavilion in the park, a beautiful edifice erected and ornamented entirely to the taste of the fair sisters: Its form was octagon, and the columns that supported it of curious marble, and a flight of steps with white and gold railing led to the Portico, the door of which was inlaid with pannels of looking-glass, reflecting the beautiful prospect, and deluding the eye with an imaginary view through the pavilion, which produced a charming effect. The window opened in the Italian stile, lattices of green wire supported the clustering roses that encircled one window, while around the opposite one luxuriant passion-flowers corresponded their beautiful shade.

The door opening discovered a spacious room, around whose sides in various recesses the muses were beautifully represented; in one part an elegant piano forte, in another a noble library, while various capital drawings, the performance of Lady Adela, embellished the compartments: Before the chimney was raised a stage filled with exotics. The Virginia Philomel, suspended at a third window over a bowl of gold fish; and at a fourth was fixed a camera-obscura. The matting which covered the center of the floor was composed of coloured straw, wove to the fancy in various devices, and

formed by the fair hands of the ladies, a charming specimen of their taste and abilities: Several pieces of embroidery, cloth, bead, fillagree, and various other curious performances were arranged in different situations, and the delighted Marquis had given it the appellation of "the Pavilion of ingenuity."

Boundless was the landscape on either side, and from this delightful retreat Lady Adela's pencil traced the picturesque beauties of nature; here they constantly devoted several hours every morning, to indulge the wanderings of fancy, while some new invention formed an admirable chef d'œuvre from the fertility of their imagination, which furnished them a continual source of amusement.

'Twas here the Marquis had taken a book at one of the windows, while Lady Adela was adding the last tints to a beautiful landscape, and Lady Louisa practising a new Italian air, on her piano, when Montague opened the door of the pavilion and presented Rosalie.

The Marquis started and the book dropped—the ladies instantly rose and conducted her to their father, where the lovely girl respectfully dropped on one knee, and suffused in blushes raised her fine eyes absorbed in tears, as the Marquis pressed her hand and bid her rise.

“My noble generous protector,” cried the charming creature, “May the ill-fated girl your bounty has cherished, reward, by her grateful affection, the duty she owes her benefactor, long may she share the tender affection he has faithfully shewn her helpless infancy, sacred to the memory of an honoured parent once possessing his favour and esteem.”

The Marquis clasped her hand, “Grateful Rosalie,” replied he, “the memory of thy valued mother steals from me an avowal of equal affection for her lovely child, come then to my bosom and receive that blessing and protection no longer hers to bestow, while her angelic form hovers over us, and guards thee pure and spotless as her fainted spirit.”

“But I must leave you, my children, for a short interval, Rosalie St. Clair is so expressly the image of her lovely mother, that it recalls a thousand painfully-pleasing ideas to my memory: You never knew the amiable Lady Saint Glair, my sweet girls, but as the friend of thy father receive with sisterly affection her hapless orphan, may you ever be united in an indissoluble band of love, and may happiness continually wave her banner round you.”

• He then retired from the pavilion to his library, and summoned Montague, from whom he received the miniature carefully sealed, which he instantly opened, and be-

held indeed the most accurate resemblance of his adored Lavinia ; thrice he pressed it to his lips, and then consigned it to the inmost recess of his escrutore, enclosed in a packet of papers, expressing ever particular of the birth of Rosalie, with several letters from Lady Lavinia, these were carefully sealed with the Marquis's arms, and directed for Rosalie."

"At my decease, Montague," said he, closing the drawer, "These papers will explain the present mystery, and my sacred promise will remain unbroke, the faithful vow has never been revealed by the lip of Augustus, and the angel who records it on the page of futurity shall never stain it with a blot."

"I think too I have totally prevented Edwin seeing her, he may now traverse Chamouny and not excite one fear in my bosom."

Montague trembled at the idea of investigation, but as the Marquis did not imagine he had met his son, the subject was not mentioned, and Montague was dismissed with orders to summon the ladies to tea, happy to have escaped advancing a falsehood, though had necessity compelled him, he must have submitted to the action of duplicity, by concealing the fact, to preserve Lord Edwin's happiness.

So delighted were the charming sisters with their new companion, that the cot-

tager of Chamouny, in their opinion, was metamorphosed to the goddess of innocence and heavenly complaisance ; her soul was congenial to their own, and fortune seemed to have presented them the friend they had long sought. Rosalie, charmed with the unexpected civility of her reception, was at a loss to express the fervent gratitude she felt ; their polite conversation, their encouraging smiles of approbation, gave her the most pleasing hopes that her endeavours would ensure the friendship she was so much indebted, and which it should be her study to preserve, and she almost conceived it ungrateful to give one sigh of regret to the memory of past happiness in Chamouny, while benignity beamed in every countenance at the castle, and welcomed her with the unfeigned smile of sincerity.

Passing the green-house, Andrew, whose curiosity was ever alive, was purposely refreshing his blooming parterre, and on their approach had gathered a beautiful rose, from which his rusty scissors were clipping the thorns, "Would the lady do me the honour to accept a rose?" asked he, making a low bow, while his silver-threaded locks waved on his sun-burnt cheek.

"Gratefully, friend," answered she, placing it in her bosom. Andrew bowed as a flush of pleasure crossed his cheek.

"I subjoin this lily," cried Lady Louisa, gathering one that at the instant courted her hand, "Rose et Lis," added she, "will for the future be my favourite selection, I shall place them on the left side my bosom, and I trust they'll not fade. Lady Adela complimented the bon mot, and Rosalie's blush outvied the blooming present.

Returning to the house they were met in the hall by Mrs. Gertrude, Agnes, and Wilson, the attendant of Lady Louisa, to whom the news of Mademoiselle's arrival had been announced by Montague, cautiously guarding all possible tendency to discovery, of course then the cottage was not mentioned, he only knew her name to be Miss St. Clair, and that he brought her from a recluse family in Switzerland, that she had a genteel fortune, and was the Marquis's ward: The very idea of a recluse family instantly struck the imperious Wilson, who conceived the new inmate to be a person of no distinction, as she boasted neither the title of your Grace, or my Lady, consequently was received by her as an humble intruder, for insufferable was the hauteur of this fille de chambre. Each simpered and courtied, as Rosalie passed, and each in return met her grateful smile.

"No great things!" said Le Brun, the Marquis's valet, significantly shrugging his

shoulders, and elevating his broad black eye-brows, as he carelessly threw himself across a chair, and treated himself with a pinch of snuff; "No hauteur I'll allow, but mightily devoid of the true *je ne sçais quoi*, we people of fashion are so noted for displaying in file, what do you think *ma petite Wilson*. I'll bet your black sparklers against her insipid blue eyes ten to one.

"Bless me, *Le Brun*," (answered she, stretching her leg across the hearth to kick a little Italian dog, originally brought by Montague from Chamouny) "Don't plague me about *Mademoiselle*, for I detest Italians, a set of crafty toads, always squeaking and drawling, I hope it won't fall to my lot to attend her, if she was any body of consequence one would not mind, but as she has been bred up among the mountains, mighty private it seems, I suppose she'll be frisking up by sun-rise, when I shall be just in my first sleep, egad if she does she may huddle on her cloaths as she can, I shan't attend her *larum* if it rings fifty times; Lord I should not have patience not I, there's plague enough with this *sham-moon* dog, we don't want any more outlandish creatures methinks."

Gertrude now interfered to silence her scandalous loquacity, "Suspend your opinion," cried she, "at least 'till time convinces you of the reality of your ill-natured suggestions, be lenient to the wasp 'till

you feel its sting, 'tis then time enough to retaliate the injury, but here is Andrew, now judge, by his opinion, "your tea is poured out and your matted-chair ready placed for you Andrew," said she. "Oh, I don't want any," replied he, "I have had a sufficient feast upon such a smile as my eyes never saw before, in return for a few simple roses I presented that angelic visiter; powers of mercy, she shamed all my roses as she passed, please Heaven I'll be up early, for I heard her tell our ladies she loved to hear the lark's morning song."

"Ah deuce take it, I thought so," cried Wilson knitting her brows, and muttering in a low key, unheard by Andrew, "I suppose she sings morning hymns to the sun."

"Yes, yes," continued Andrew, chatting over his cup, "I shall be up, and perhaps I shall have another smile for my breakfast; Montague says her name is Miss Rose—something, but as I don't understand the parley woos, Le Brun will tell me how to pronounce it."

"Oh," answered he, "its mighty pretty, quite in your stile, old boy, it means the charming composition of roses and lilies, so you must call her Miss Rosalie"

"Roses and lilies," reiterated Wilson, fine stuff indeed, I wish Madam don't prove more like thorns and thistles."

"I wish heartily," answered Andrew, trotting out of the room, "that you had a thorn in your tongue, though 'tis sharp enough already, God knows, so perhaps a thistle in your throat might be a more useful silencer of your spite."

Thus ended the controversy, and Agnes agreed she would officiate at Miss Rosalie's toilet to prevent any farther altercation. Accordingly at the hour of retiring she attended, but the amiable stranger declined giving her any more trouble than unpacking her portmanteau, for which she civilly presented the obliging Agnes with a small osier work-basket; her lamp was then lighted, her door fastened, and Agnes retired to the house-keeper's room with her curious present, to the no small surprise and vexation of Wilson, who secretly determined to have one also the first opportunity.

C H A P. XIII.

THE dawn of day tinged with orient beam the windows of Rosalie's apartment, and as soon as the servants were stirring she quitted her chamber, and descending the great staircase tripped out to enjoy the

breezes of the morn; at the entrance of the shrubbery she met Andrew, with his spade and water-pots, indefatigably pursuing the labours of the day, who, on her approach, let down the corner of his woollen apron to conceal his morning stockings.

“Pray friend is Montague up?” asked the fair stroller.

“No, my lady,” answered he, “but I will call him.”

“Not for the world,” said Rosalie, “let him enjoy his repose; but as I did not know my way, I thought he might have conducted me over the grounds if he had been disengaged: Pray is this the way to the green-house I passed last night, could you oblige me with a view of the plants?”

“To be sure my lady,” answered the delighted gardener, “I’ll just step in for my coat, with your leave, for I am not fit to attend you in this morning jacket.”

“Oh don’t trouble yourself to change it,” replied Rosalie, “I shall not remark the jacket while your civility furnishes me other amusement; ’tis the venerable habit of labour, friend, never be ashamed of it, while it bears the marks of diligent attention to your employment, ’tis a badge of honour in my opinion, and a glory to the industrious wearer.”

Highly pleased with this charming compliment, every syllable of which was treasured in his memory, Andrew bowed and

led the way, longing to bless her for her goodness, yet not daring to utter a word, fearful of offending.

After conducting her to the green-house, exhibiting his store of exotics, and explaining their several names and properties, he proceeded to the most favourite eminences to explore the adjacent country.

"But we boast far more beautiful views in Switzerland," said Rosalie smiling.

"Why, yes, Ma'am so I have heard my Lord the Marquis say; and our young master Lord Edwin, they say, is now gone over to enjoy them; Heaven preserve him, a better gentleman never was born; God help me, I remember his christening, and rare doings we had; he was always a lovely child, and now he's a man every body adores him he's so charitable and condescending."

Andrew had jarred a tender string, and it vibrated on the heart of Rosalie, who begged he would shew her the way to the pavilion, that she might indulge an hour in reading. They then proceeded through the shrubbery, and Andrew opening the door, "hoped he should not disturb her by pruning part of the foliage that obscured one of the windows, as company were coming through the grounds that morning."

"I must set these geraniums too out of the way," continued he, "for one of the

ladies is very fond of a greyhound, who always follows her horse, and suffers him to ramble over every thing in his way; the last time he scampered over these geraniums like mad, and snapt the head of my finest auricula, so if I don't take care we shall have a second part of the same tune: My Lord too was not pleased, but Miss Villars did not care, she only whistled him off."

"Whistled!" replied Rosalie, astonished at the idea.

"Oh, yes, my Lady, she can whistle vastly well, and rides a hunting with Lord Edwin's hounds, in a scarlet jacket and a jockey cap, and our huntsman, Robin, says, she leaps a five-barred gate better than any woman in England; but my Lord don't ask her to ride when he can help it."

A second blush suffused the cheek of Rosalie, not that she dreaded the idea of a rival in a heart that had manifested its faithful uninterested attachment in every instance, nor would she for the world have drawn from Andrew the slightest question tending to curiosity, though had she been so disposed she could not have found a more intelligent being for her subject, but her noble soul scorned such mean artifice, and therefore telling Andrew she would not detain him longer, he went merrily to work with his shears, while Rosalie opening the library, drew from thence by

chance Thomson's beautiful Poems; the book opened exactly on the story of Lavinia. The charming tale excited a tear—it reminded her of a far-distant and valued friend. Palemon's generosity impressed the idea of Lord Edwin, and the character of Lavinia seemed nearly incident to her own: She shut the book, and raising her eyes perceived Andrew steadfastly gazing in apparent astonishment at the tear she thought private and imperceptibly shed, and a sigh escaped her, which was answered by an involuntary responsive one from Andrew, as he descended the ladder with his shears and basket.

Rosalie touched the guitar, but not knowing its art hung it up again. A port folio of drawings lay open on the table, and she ventured to peep at a few, when turning the leaves, the wind being very brisk, waisted a small vellum medallion into a thicket of woodbines. Terrified and fearful another breeze should catch it, she hastened down the steps to regain it, but what was her delight and surprise on beholding the most perfect resemblance of Lord Edwin, sketched by the pencil of his sister. "Inestimable treasure!" cried she, "would I dared steal thee, or that I could trace such another, but that's impossible, yet would Lady Adela condescend to instruct me, I do think by constant practice I should soon be able to make an humble attempt, and

if so, it shall be the first favour I solicit ; however incapable I may be of attaining any degree of perfection, I will at least exert my best endeavours."

Again she examined every feature and then replaced it exactly in the same situation, when turning a few more leaves a profile drawing of Lady Louisa presented itself, and the dress being somewhat similar to her mother's miniature, reminded her of the Marquis's unkindly depriving her of it, without ever assigning any reason to her.

The hour of nine was now proclaimed by the clock from the chapel, an elegant edifice for the private use of the family, erected on an eminence in the park, terminating a grove of lofty elms, and forming a most pleasing spectacle from the windows of the castle, and reminded her it was time to return to the breakfast parlour, where she found the family just assembling : Rosalie blushing beautiful as the enchanting morning, curtsied and took her seat."

"If you enjoy the delightful breezes of the morning, I don't know why you should steal the bloom of all our roses, covetous girl," said Lady Louisa patting her cheek.

"Indeed ladies I am alone indebted to the same dispenser of bloom that reared those roses, bountiful Providence, who tinted their leaves with beauty, flushed my cheek with health ; I have been up these

two hours amusing myself in the pavilion with some elegant poems, which so much interested my attention I did not regard the hour 'till the chapel clock warned me to return.

"Are you fond of reading?" asked Lady Louisa.

"Extremely so," replied Rosalie, "and my guardian, M. Tourville, who delighted in study, used to furnish me with numerous pleasant and instructive books, by which means I employed every leisure hour in instructing myself and Madelon; he also made me write frequently, corrected my errors, and assisted my improvement, and every week I was obliged to translate, by the help of my Dictionary and own genius some select piece for his inspection: Such was the system of my education under the friendly auspices of the most amiable of men, while my merit was constantly rewarded by some new and interesting book, and by this means I acquired the sole instruction I ever received, although I seldom saw my friendly preceptor, every interval of his absence was dedicated to his parting injunction."

Rosalie wiped away a tear of affection to his memory, and the Marquis forgot to drink his chocolate, while he listened with silent rapture to the sentiments of his lovely protegee.

"Miss Villars will be here by two o'clock," said Lady Adela, "and in the mean time we will employ our morning in the pavilion, where you shall see my drawings and Louisa's embroidery and tambour, and which ever you prefer we will with pleasure instruct you in."

Rosalie readily acknowledged her partiality to the crayon, and also to obtain some instruction on the guitar. "I have a beautiful lute up stairs," said she, "the valued present of a friend at Chamouny."

"Oh, fetch it by all means," said Lady Louisa, "it will have a charming effect in the pavilion, and you must indulge us."

They then repaired thither, and anxiously awaited the commencement of the dulcet melody from the lovely minstrel.

CHAP. XIV.

SOFTLY sweet the plaintive strain broke on the attentive ear, and she played with exquisite taste a pastoral air, whose beautiful simplicity delighted Lady Louisa.

"Pray who taught you, Rosalie?" asked she, charmed with her taste and execution.

“Lindor, the mountaineer,” replied Rosalie, “the humble admirer of Madelon, consequently ever esteemed by me: Madelon could not learn, indeed she had not time, but my fancy was ever so delighted and inspired by music that I begged Lindor to become my instructor: Oh! how did I use to long for the hour of evening, that brought our lively youth to the cottage.”

“Giraldine then took her knitting to the little bench at the door, Madelon and I pursued our spinning, Josephine wound our cotton, while Reuben listened with a smile of satisfaction to each romantic note. Thus passed the hours in innocent amusement till the rising moon warned him to depart, and as it lighted him home silvered the pane of our little casement, and guided us by its clear and beautiful beam to our pillows.

“Charming rusticity?” exclaimed Lady Adela, “I am delighted with your description.” At that moment one of the windows became shaded, and Sir Henry tapped at it, mounted on Andrew’s short ladder, which stood invitingly fixed, had been forgot to be removed, and climbing up with the agility of a squirrel, he popped in his head, but seeing Rosalie coming to remove a stand of flowers to facilitate his entrance, he drew back, begging pardon for his abrupt intrusion, not expecting to meet the eye of a stranger.

"Pray step in," said Lady Louisa, "Sir Henry's temerity seldom finds an obstacle his ingenuity and address cannot surmount, and as a fluent and eloquent apology would be no punishment to him to repeat impromptu, do not let us be deprived of it—on those conditions we pardon, therefore make an elegant entree."

Sir Henry obeyed. "I trust," said he, "Lady Louisa will not deem it an impropriety to follow a good example, and as ladies now-a-days shew their dexterity in leaping out of windows, it is but proper gentlemen should keep them in countenance, by evincing their agility in climbing in; do not then blame a self-raised action, charming fair; Miss Villars and her beaux are just behind, and probably they may be inclined to try the same method by way of novel exercise."

"How ridiculous!" said Lady Louisa, turning half angrily away.

At that moment a loud peal of laughter burst from the shrubbery, and Miss Villars, her brother, Colonel Ardvine, and Lord Carlton, ascended to the pavilion; Miss Villars took her seat on the steps, declaring she was tired to death, and too hot to be stived up in a close room, "So let me alone, Ardvine, you tiresome toad," continued she, stretching out her legs three parts displayed, "Do unlace my boot, I have hurt my ancle, and the confinement makes it painful."

Shocked at her indelicacy, Rosalie politely offered her assistance.

"No, thank you, answered the Amazon, with her arms crossed and her foot extended to the Colonel, "Ardivine is a very useful animal on such occasions, I will not trouble you."

Then leering at Lord Carlton in a half whisper, "I presume this blushing Miss is the Marquis's ward I lately heard of, quite a composition of insipidity methinks, good eyes enough too, but not the least tincture of vivacity about them, merely as if God had placed them in her head only to look with, not to express the passions of the soul, moves like clock-work, or as if the poor thing was afraid of damaging a basket of eggs every time she steps or turns round."

This speech, finished by a tonish stare of impudence, accompanied with a rude loud laugh, much irritated Lord Carlton.

"Upon my word," replied he, "you are very severe, Miss Villars, and in my opinion where 'tis quite needless, I have heard much of Miss St. Clair's beauty and sensibility, and I confess I think the description of the former by no means partial, nor do I conceive I shall be much disappointed in the latter, at least from appearances, however I shall draw no harsh conclusions, nor suffer myself to be biassed by so transient a view, my motto is "lenity," and I always cautiously avoid cen-

sure, least I incur the character of a malicious scandalizer; and were I a female, the idea of envy might also be attached; for, alas! that is become so glaring and predominant a passion with them, that it moulds every virtue to its own jaundiced impression; for, like a nettle planted by a rose, you cannot attempt to admire or touch its innocent beauty but you feel the sting of its malicious and envious competitor, who, conscious of its inattractive powers, waves its poison to contaminate the harmless blossom, and undermines its tender leaves where least suspected; if such a weed rankles in the bosom of Rosalie St. Clair, Ethelbert Carlton will endeavour to eradicate its pernicious root. Miss Villars may applaud or condemn his morality; but a moment's reflection will convince her the lecture, however unpleasing, is founded on truth, and I trust her candour and good sense will coincide to clear him from the imputation of prejudice or rigidity to the errors of levity."

This fervently addressed speech by no means pleased his auditor. "I think," cried she, "Carlton would write a mighty good sermon, and if he will make an attempt to preach it also, I will condescend to nod some Sunday afternoon in an opposite pew, for the sake of a moralizing dream."

Lord Carlton disgusted with her insolent retort walked away, and took his seat by Lady Adela, and Miss Villars finding herself abandoned by the beaux, soon after entered the pavilion, with her boot in one hand and her hat in the other, and without regarding the presence of any one, ran up to the glass to admire her blowzy appearance, while the officious Colonel, a finished *petit maitre*, followed close behind. "Your charming tresses sont derange, ma deesse," cried he.

"Well then, plat them up again," replied she, "I believe I shall be cropped for Newmarket, it will be so convenient to hunt too with Lord Edwin. Ah! a-propos, when does he return?"

"Very shortly," answered Lady Adela, "but he means to sell his fine hunter, for the last chace was so infringed on by the farmers, whom Edwin did not like to reprove, that it rendered it disagreeable, and as he is not very partial to that cruel diversion, he was easily prevailed on to give it up."

A second glance at the mirror discovered a fault in the adjustment of her neckcloth and off it came, folded in an enormous stuffing and two extra handkerchiefs. Thus far undressed, it was necessary to inquire if the lady wished to make any other alteration, while the charming sisters, reddening with confusion, begged she would

retire to their dressing-room, where Agnes should attend her; but, lost to every impulse of delicacy, and a perfect adept of assurance, she undauntedly replied, "she should soon finish." Her dress being soon after adjusted, Lady Louisa proposed a walk, and parasoles being provided, and supported by the gentlemen, Lady Louisa took the arm of Sir Henry, while Rosalie, disgusted and terrified, shrunk back to the side of Lord Carlton, who passing his arm through her's on one side, and Lady Adela's on the other, strolled to a different part, and left Miss Villars leaning on the shoulder of Colonel Ardvine.

They soon after adjourned to the stable to give their opinion of a fine horse lately purchased, in whose commendation Miss Villars was very eloquent, to the no small amusement of the grooms, to whom she made several observations: They then returned to the house to take chocolate, and departed, earnestly entreating the ladies to favour her with their company at the villa, but cautiously avoided inviting Rosalie, whom she treated with the very essence of hauteur, and making her only a slight inclination of her head en-passant, mounted her horse and set off in full trot for a wager with the Colonel.

Many and various were the opinions concerning Miss Villars:—To the men she was a general object of derision—to the

women a disgusting Amazonian: Yet, even while they viewed her conduct, carried to a pitch of absurdity, their lenient bosoms could not help pitying her errors. Levity in the extreme, tempered by a degree of impetuosity and ill nature, was her perfect character, yet though her behaviour warranted every freedom, her virtue caught the most transient alarm.

Possessed of a fine fortune and the only daughter of a noble family, every one bowed to the dictates of Georgina, and thus trained up in the practice of self-will, could it be wondered she now reigned the haughty tyrant of uncontrouled power.

The fair sisters beheld her with disgust; she was by no means a pleasing associate, whose aspiring virtues could direct or emulate their own, yet as Mr. Villars, her father, was a man of general acquaintance and respectability, and frequently visited at the castle from business or pleasure, it was necessary to be distantly polite to his daughter, who occasionally intruded, but seldom had her visits returned; yet to the ladies she always behaved as polite and friendly as her irritable temper would permit.

CHAP. XV.

A FEW days elapsed when a letter from Lord Edwin announced his intended arrival at the castle in three or four days. The Marquis instantly planned a scheme of sending Rosalie to the abbey, where the Dowager Lady Mentoria had retired about three weeks since: He wished not to send his daughters, as Edwin might probably be inclined to pay them a visit, yet to suffer her to travel sixty miles alone would be improper, and as it was not in her power to accompany her without a degree of suspicion arising, he determined Montague should convey her: and lest his daughters should embarrass him by inquiring the reason of her hasty departure, he resolved to give them a slight intimation of his suspicions, by telling them, he begged they would never encourage Edwin in any such ideas of Rosalie, on pain of his eternal displeasure: this they faithfully promised, and hastened to the chamber of Rosalie, informing her, some friends were expected at the Castle in a day or two, for whose accommodation her apartment would be wanted, and it was the Marquis's wish she

should go on a visit to the Abbey during their stay, for some private reasons they could not assign.

“ When our visitors are gone,” said Lady Adela, “ we will come and partake your society at Thornley, where our good aunt will make you an excellent companion, her spacious library will serve to amuse you, and your lute will sound sweetly, and delight Lady Mentoria in her sequestered shades, while various other amusements will charm the fleeting hours and not leave you a languid moment.”

Rosalie bowed obedience with a heart far more inclined to undertake her journey than they suspected, and in the evening stepping into the Marquis's post chariot and four, she set off blithe and happy, waving her hand in respectful adieus as the carriage drove down the avenue, and the Marquis felt a degree of pleasure tempered by the hope of security as he watched the carriage out of sight.

The evening of the second day shewed her the turrets of the Abbey peeping thro' the ivy that encircled their basis, and the thick and gloomy-shading plantations that embosomed the gothic pile; the lambent fires of day darted a burnished gleam on the high arched windows, and eve's last rosy tints were just expiring, while ruby shadows in fantastic forms played in the empurpled west, and the wild poet of the

glade joined her soft dulcet note to animate the passing woodman's rural song, who, homeward trudging to his little cottage, in the neighbouring hamlet, displaced the comfortable pipe to chant his rustic ballad, and moved his tattered hat in token of civility to the lovely stranger.

The element was serenely beautiful, innumerable fleecy clouds, tinged with soft golden fluid, in fantastic forms floated on the azured canopy, and in the wide expanse of æther the moon's transparent silver-seeming mask peeped forth its mystic and refulgent form.

At length the chaise stopped at the antique porch; ponderous arches supported the massy fabric, and from the ivy-twined pillars deep secreted the little chearful robin peeped his head, and hailed the stranger with a welcome song. The massy hinges hospitably opened, and received the timid guest.

Montague conducted her through a spacious hall of black marble, while on the ancient carved pannels innumerable warlike trophies were suspended, the memorials of at least two centuries; the solemn gloom and the sound of her own feet echoing up the great staircase made her shudder, and she closely followed Montague, not daring to turn her head, passing through a long range of gallery, and peeping into several large apartments, Montague

opened an enormous door and Rosalie started.

On a high chair of crimson velvet, curiously cut, sat Lady Mentoria ; a diminutive figure about seventy-six ; habited in a rich brown tabby sacque and treble ruffles with a short black lace apron and hood ; she arose and politely saluted her fair guest, who presented a letter from the Marquis, which the Dowager read with attention, often glancing a look at Rosalie, who was surveying with astonishment the ponderous window frames and dark wainscot, against whose chequered pannel several family portraits in lumbering frames started their gruff countenances, and chilled her beating heart.

" Mercy on me, thought she, " I wish I was in my native cottage, or safe out of this place, I have often heard of haunted castles and towers, and this gloomy Abbey brings it strongly to my remembrance."

" Lady Mentoria finished the letter and entering into the most pleasing and interesting conversation, totally dissipated every dislike from the bosom of her fair visiter ; in short it was hard to say which was most pleased with their companion, for Lady Mentoria subjoined the most amiable disposition to the many virtues she possessed, and never forgot the sunshine of eighteen could cheer the chill winter of seventy, tempered with the genial contrast of acquiescent

politeness and good nature retaliated from youth to age, tenderly beloved by all who knew her, and respected by every class of society, she had bent the youthful minds of her nieces to the perfect model of her own estimable character.

The hour of retiring drew nigh, and Lady Mentoria, with the alacrity of youth, tripped along the gallery, and led Rosalie to her apartment, where wishing her refreshing slumbers she withdrew.

Rosalie left alone began to examine every part of her spacious chamber; the ceiling was vaulted, and grotesque characters represented on its damp-discoloured surface exhibited the most hideous and nondescript creatures: The windows were extremely high and arched in the old fashioned cathedral stile, darkened at top with several pains of stained glass, one only opened low enough to obtain a view of the garden; she drew up the dark green damask curtain that shaded it, and threw up the sash to take a survey of what the trembling moonlight's palid beam would permit her to discover through the thick branches of shading trees, that appeared to bound a portion of park, or lawn; all was silent but the hoarse voice of a Newfoundland dog, from the porter's lodge, that growled occasionally; she now drew down the heavy frame and began to undress.

On the opposite side of the room stood a high antique bed, whose fringed canopy suspended from the ceiling by tarnish brackets; the hangings of the room were faded tapestry, representing the famous siege of Troy, but as Rosalie was totally unacquainted with the heathen mythology, she was ignorant of what it was.

Her wax taper now burnt dim and increased the gloom, her heart beat quick and irregular, and she would have given the world for a companion: Something at that moment tapped at the window, and the terrified Rosalie remained immovable, with her eyes earnestly fixed on the curtain, to observe its movement, but all being still she mustered resolution to approach it, and lifting the candle as high as she could raise it at arms length, the sudden light disturbed the intruder in the form of a large bat, which fluttered down on the floor: This was some relief to her terror, and she compassionately gave him his liberty, and once more composed herself and undressed; but, alas! crossing the room to extinguish the candle something twitched the top of her hand, and with an involuntary shriek, she fell on the ground, and the wax taper being in her hand was smothered and left her in total darkness.

Her shriek soon echoed to Lady Mentoria's chamber, and the Dowager not being as yet in bed, though she had dismissed her

attendant, slipped on a long robe de chambre and hastened to inquire the cause, and opening the door, all in white, with a small lamp in her hand, her grotesque head dress, had probably increased the terror of Rosalie, had she not fallen on her face with both hands over her eyes, 'till the voice of Lady Mentoria roused her stupor, to whom she related her fright, begging a thousand pardons for the trouble she had occasioned. Lady Mentoria smiling, tenderly soothed her agitation, "Make yourself happy, little timorous girl," said she, "Hervey shall sleep with you; however, let me convince you, the imaginary spectre that touched you was no other than the bell-tassel, which depends from the centre of the ceiling, and which you probably did not observe, or suppose yourself within its reach, therefore rest assured there are no ghosts haunt this Abbey that have not four legs at least, and should they molest you, your good sense and innocence will protect you 'till we can trace the tremendous intruders."

Poor Rosalie, abashed and angry at her weakness and exposition, entreated Lady Mentoria to retire, saying she was perfectly convinced of her folly, and would not trouble Mrs. Hervey to change her bed.

With this perfect assurance of courage the old Lady retired, and Rosalie jumped into bed to reflect on her ridiculous timidity, which she determined to conquer, and

committing herself to the protection of the guardian angels, who hover around the pillow of innocence, she reclined in the sweetest slumber, 'till a robin, perched on a branch that shaded her window, waked her with his morning oraison.

CH A P. XVI.

ROSALIE obeyed the summon of her plumaged monitor, and descended to the parlour just in time to see Montague set off home. For two hours she amused herself in the grounds, and strolling to the end of a high terrace that bounded the Abbey, she ascended a flight of steps that led to part of a rugged cliff, from whence on the pebbly shore she could discover the hovels of several fishermen, and their ruddy children dancing and amusing themselves on the sands, while their cheerful voices chatting and laughing broke upon the silent breeze and wasted every syllable to her ear.

A beautiful serene ocean was bounded by a fertilized country on one side, and a noble shore guarded by impending cliffs on the other. Here she amused herself half an hour and then returned, resolving to spend

every leisure hour in this romantic and beautiful spot, as a favourite retreat from the glooms of the Abbey, when Lady Mentoria would indulge her with a stroll.

On entering the parlour Mrs. Hervey made her appearance, begging to know if she chose to breakfast, as her Lady always took her chocolate in her own room, which she never quitted 'till twelve, therefore desired her young visitor would amuse herself as she pleased.

Rosalie no sooner finished her dejune but she went to the library, where she entertained herself for near three hours, 'till Lady Mentoria came in search of her.

"How is my sweet young friend?" asked she, peeping in with her parasole and cloak, "Will she take a walk?"

"Gladly, Madam," answered Rosalie, "I shall be happy to accompany you."

"I am going," returned the Dowager, "to visit my pensioners; I have three poor honest fishers, whose families I support, and by employing them in procuring fish for my family, and others in the vicinity, I amuse and keep them from the lethargy of indolence, and never admitting a superiority of preference, if one more envious quarrels with the other, I rectify their mistakes, and my decision is their law: Thus I preserve perfect tranquillity, and I never see a cloud of sorrow or discontent shade their brows; ever blithe and industrious,

they may truly be stiled happy cottagers—But you shall judge.

Proceeding to the cliff where Rosalie had taken her morning seat, she discovered a winding path guarded by small green rails, which Lady Mentoria had ordered to be cut through the cliff, in easy descent expressly for the facility of her visits, to save at least two miles going round; a bench at the bottom rested her again to respiration, and Rosalie carried a basket of currants for the children.

“It will please the little creatures,” said Lady Mentoria, “and it will be a wholesome treat for them: These my dear young friend, are the attentions I wish you to fulfil, when indisposition or engagement prevents my attendance.”

“A pleasing employment, my dear Madam, I shall willingly perform to the best of my abilities,” replied Rosalie.

Three neat looking women and seven chubby children now welcomed their noble benefactress: One produced her spinning, another her knitting, and the third constantly made and repaired the fishing nets; while their husbands at various hours when they were on shore, were each furnished with a loom, and wove dowlafs for their own wear and the neighbouring villagers, to whom her Ladyship permitted them to sell any requisite quantity, by way of per-

quisite and encouragement of their industry.

The boat soon after arrived, and the fishers leaping on shore presented some beautiful prawns which were received with a benignant smile of satisfaction, and after making a few inquiries, and distributing the fruit among the children, (whose sparkling eyes beamed expectation on the basket's store) enjoined them to be good and dutiful, and slipping a shilling into each of their hands, told them it was the gift of the young lady they saw with her, to whom they must be respectfully obedient as to herself.

Slowly they re-ascended the cliff often pausing to enjoy the healthy breezes of the ocean, and contemplate the restless wave dashing its starry foam along the pebbly shore, while at a distance the inflated white sails of a passing vessel burnished by the meridian sun, glided on the bosom of the parted wave, and dazzled with its brightness the attentive eye that watched its lessening sight—Rosalie was charmed.

“As you love to contemplate the beauties of nature and innocence,” said Lady Mentoria, “I shall now lead you to an inland scene; I have seven cottages in the village which contain inhabitants of every description, among them are the youthful and the aged; in one dwells a young industrious couple just married, in a second

an aged pair, in a third a desolated elderly widow, who instructs and protects two little orphans, in a fourth a couple in the autumn of life, surrounded by four charming children, whose notability furnishes and assists their tender parents; in the fifth lives a venerable old warrior, and two sons, sprightly, clever lads, now his only glory, though the field of honour has invested him with many badges of valour, and though deprived of one leg, his crutches are in his opinion trophies he has never regretted to exchange; my sixth cottage contains a poor blind man and one daughter, innocent, mild, and beautiful as the morn, the most dutiful affectionate girl the fondest parent could delight in; while in my seventh and last rural habitation lives a distressed curate, with a lame wife and three children, to him I have allotted the constant and regular observance of morning and evening prayers, in every family, and to instruct them in reading and writing, of which he is capable, though the hand of oppression and misfortune has formerly crushed the talents, that it suffered to expand, had reverted honour to himself and manifested improvement in others; thus his time is pretty well employed, and there is not a child in the village who does not delight to receive the mild and pleasing instructions of Evelyn."

Passing through a romantic picturesque lane, the rural irregular village presented itself—Evelyn, whose cottage was first, sat reading at his door, and closed his book to welcome the visitors; Catherine Evelyn was preparing the dinner; a fine baby lay in the cradle, rocked by a little girl about five years of age, while a healthy boy about two years older was shelling some beans.

“Patty’s sampler is almost finished, my Lady,” said the good Catherine, leaving the kneading of her dumplings, and presenting a small piece of canvas very prettily marked.

“Industrious little maid,” said her Ladyship, giving the rosy Patty six-pence, which was consigned to the security of her mother’s screw-box, and the visitors unwilling to protract the dinner took their leave.

The widow next presented her little charges, whom she was teaching to knit, and after commending and rewarding their industry, they passed on to a third.

“This is Philip Stanley’s cottage,” said Lady Mentoria, “and the faithful Eller, his new-made bride I see is busy at work, let us step in.”

Ellen rose with a basket of stockings she was repairing, and Lady Mentoria complimenting her jocularly on her improving looks, enquired for Philip, who was gone

to cut turf and faggots, proceeded to the next, where they found Lennox, the old warrior, mending one of his crutches, and whistling, 'God save the King.'

"Here is a news-paper for you," said Lady Mentoria, "which I know is a great treat to you, but do not suffer the feelings of sensibility to agitate you too far, remember you have been poorly, yet I don't forbid you to drop a tear of humanity for the woes of a fellow soldier, as you read the sad devastating fate of war."

Lennox bowed and consigned it to his pocket, while his eloquent eye and shaking head seemed to say he could enlarge on that subject if permitted.

"Keep it to yourself," said her Ladyship, "and when you have perused it give it to Evelyn."

The neighbouring cottage sheltered an aged pair, the poor old man crept feebly out to the door, with his spectacles in one hand and a letter in the other: "Your Ladyship will excuse the derangement of our cottage," said he, wiping a tear on his sleeve, "for we have just received a letter from our dear boy Ben, who has been eight years in the East Indies, come next Christmas, and the good fellow sends us the joyful news, he shall be down here in less than a fortnight, and has brought home something to make our lives comfortable out of his earnings: Powers of mercy, we have

been out of our wits with joy these three hours, and not a jot of work done for thinking on it, for we thought he might be dead, and never had a notion of seeing him in this world again."

"Well, said Lady Mentoria, "don't flurry yourself, I will provide a bed for him in your back room, let me know when he comes, send him to the Abbey, his dutiful attention pleases me."

The old man bowed and Lady Mentoria continued her walk.

At the door of another habitation sat two fine young girls spinning, while a youth was busily employed in pruning some plants in a little garden he had cultivated and brought to tolerable perfection; and a younger one was conning his lesson for the next day. Lady Mentoria inquired a few particulars and passed on to the next.

"You must know," said she, "this cot contains my favourite pensioner, 'tis poor blind Orford, and the sweet Maria his only child, we shall find them busy, no doubt."

Rosalie tapped at the door, which was opened by the charming cottager, with her knitting and book in her hand; on one side a small table sat the venerable Orford who hearing the voice of Lady Mentoria laid down his work and bowed his head.

"Always full of employment!" said her Ladyship, taking up some platted straw

his ingenuity had wove together, and formed into small mats and baskets.

" 'Tis merely amusement," said Orford, " but last night I finished a large basket as a present for your Ladyship, 'twill hold grapes or peaches, if you will honour me by accepting it from a poor blind man; Maria arranged the coloured straw, and she tells me I have not made one mistake; and our neighbours say 'tis very pretty."

Maria instantly brought it, and Rosalie and Lady Mentoria wiped a tear as they admired and inspected it.

" Make me two or three more, Orford, and I will give you half a crown a piece for your trouble."

" Oh ! heavens bless my good lady, the honour of making them will be quite sufficient, do I not constantly live on your bounty, and while I enjoy that blessing God forbid I should be covetous; permit me then to make them only as a small but grateful return for the abundant favours you have heaped on me, and my heart in consequence will feel lighter, by the idea of retaliating in some trifling measure, the gratitude I owe you."

" Excellent man !" said Lady Mentoria, " please yourself and finish them at your leisure : Maria's jacket wears fast and I mean to give her a new one."

A flush of joy passed Maria's cheek, and she poured her thanks. Lady Mentoria

soon after returned through the village with every one's blessing wafted around her.

"What heartfelt satisfaction do these visits afford me," said she, "and my attention is doubly repaid by the gratitude and honour of my pensioners; these my dear girl, are the real and only useful plans of relief to the indigent, it institutes decorum, creates the emulation of virtue, and minutely distinguishes the weed from the flower, for rear it even in the most prolific soil 'twill never lose its baneful qualities, and however its external appearance may deceive, the lurking poison will still contaminate it; but here, thank heaven, every blossom puts forth its leaf in friendly promise, and every transplanted branch flourishes fair and satisfactorily:—There is an exquisite pleasure, my charming friend, in contemplating such improving and improvable scenes, which few (I am sorry to say) whom ability enables, have either the courage or inclination to view in its proper light; pity the frailties of the debased part of mankind should deter the generous and humane from instituting a little select circle of the deserving, under the patronage of good advice and virtuous example."

"Exalted woman," thought Rosalie, "may the blessing of approving providence crown thee with her choicest gifts, for who so deserving?"

Delighting in visiting these virtuous pensioners, she often strolled thither, to pass an hour in the cottage of Evelyn, whose excellent plan of imparting education among his little flock gave her the highest opinion of his principles, for benign diffidence and virtuous example formed the constant method of his encouraging and progressive system for inculcating religion and morality in their most pleasing emulative forms, and ever prone to admire merit and reward its progress, she consecrated the following lines to his character; and laid them one morning on Lady Mentoria's breakfast table, as the produce of an hour's reflection when seated on her favourite cliff.

THE VILLAGE MONITOR.

Merit's a plant so delicate in bloom,
So scarce its growth and arduous to explore,
Oft' crush'd in embryo, and neglect its doom,
That promis'd buds oft' droop to rise no more.

But virtue found it with'ring on the wild,
Pity'd its fate, transplanted it with care,
In richer soil, and temp'ature more mild,
Safe from the desolate and blighting air.

Cherish'd with fost'ring hand, prolific flow'rs,
Gratefully peeping 'neath the with'ring leaf,
Diffused their fragrance in sequester'd bow'rs,
No more weigh'd down with gems of dewy grief.

Tranquil expanding in the pros'prous ray,
No tempest ruffling their envied bloom,
Serene the ev'ning of autumnal day,
With gentle breeze shall waft it to the tomb.

'Till spring re-dawning on the mould'ring grave,
Shall renovate its verdure once again,
And pity, with the drop of mercy, lave,
Its future blossom on th' etherial plain.

In allegory thus permit the pen,
To trace the village monitor's known fame,
For merit blooms with virtuous Evelyn,
And emulation consecrates his name.

Evelyn, my muse impartially repeats,
Evelyn, the pride of Thornley's lone retreats.

C H A P. XVII.

THREE days had elapsed, and Rosalie and Lady Mentoria were just partaking a fine pine after dinner, when the door opened and Lord Edwin limping in, shook hands with his aunt, and bowed gracefully to Rosalie.

"My dear Edwin," cried the astonished and confounded Lady Mentoria, "what can possibly have brought you to the Ab-

bey, is any accident the occasion of this unexpected visit?"

"A slight one," answered he. "My horse being restive, brushed too close by the wheel of a waggon, and has bruised my leg, the pain of which increasing I thought it most prudent to make the best of my way to Thornley, and not endanger it by proceeding to the Castle; but had I known you was engaged with company, I should not have intruded."

"Oh, that young lady is only my companion, the ward of your father, an amiable orphan, Edwin, who has been bred in an obscure part of Switzerland, Chamouny, I believe 'tis called: our dispositions seem exactly to suit, and I trust we shall enjoy many happy years at the Abbey, occasionally visiting my nieces at the Castle."

Luckily for Rosalie Lady Mentoria had been too much engaged and flurried by the entrance of her nephew, to observe the emotion that agitated the bosom of her fair companion. Delighted to see him—Fearful of discovery—doubtful if he had really experienced the accident he complained of, and unconscious how to gain a moment's information—a thousand perplexities banished and recalled the rose on her cheek, but very fortunately to relieve her suspense Lady Mentoria begged he would make use of some embrocation,

which she retired to fetch from her private laboratory, and the intermediate moment of her absence furnished Rosalie with a full explanation of the artful stratagem he had used to prevent suspicion, by assuring her he was perfectly free from accident, and had flown on the wings of love to enjoy her smiles.

Lady Mentoria just then entering with her embrocation, ended the momentary conversation, and thankfully taking the bottle, he retired to bathe the imaginary contusion, and soon after returned.

“ ’Tis strange,” said he as he entered, “ my boot should have given me so much pain, and yet not the least sign of external injury is perceivable.” This he thought a sufficient excuse should his aunt, as the famous village doctress, insist upon examining it and preferring her judgment and skill, so limping as naturally as possible, the Dowager’s credulity was easily imposed on.

In the course of the evening Lord Edwin distantly polite and sedate, introduced the topic of Italian. “ You are, no doubt, a proficient Ma’amfelle,” said he, addressing Rosalie by the most tender epithet in that language, which being entirely unknown to the venerable companion, furnished them the best contrivance possible, “ Will you,” continued he, “ do me the favour to correct any imperfections in that elegant language ; conversing with a native

I shall doubtless much improve the little I at present know."

"Nay," replied her Ladyship, "you are reckoned to speak it very fluent, why then talk of improvement and correction of error; but don't you mean to write to your father?"

"Certainly not, why should I alarm him," answered he, "you know his timidity would create a hundred ensuing evils, a day or two will enable me to proceed, and he will easily make an excuse for my detainment on the road, as travellers are never certain where curiosity is the deity they seek, and restriction does not clip the wings of time in her pursuance."

Every point of apparent propriety being thus settled, Edwin remained three days at the Abbey, and was then unable to plead longer excuse, while Lady Mentorina, who watched with the most rigid circumspection the conduct of his Lordship, was perfectly satisfied he entertained no other sensation for her fair charge than what his natural politeness and affability inspired, and therefore ordering her low cabriolet, took her seat by the side of Rosalie, and accompanied him part of the way for an airing.

Time had hobbled lamely with the Marquis, but when the long expected moment arrived, and Lord Edwin mentioned his delay at the Abbey, the Marquis's blood

changed cold ; but recovering himself he inquired how his sister was.

“ Perfectly well, and happy in the society of her fair charge.”

“ And what do you think of her ?” asked the Marquis, fixing his eyes intently on his son’s.

“ I think her a pleasing and interesting companion,” replied Lord Edwin, assuming all possible sangfroid, “ a brilliant, the shades of obscurity has not deprived of its lustre, and I don’t doubt a little emulative polish will soon render it a most perfect and admirable acquisition to the envied possessor : She is a pleasant Swiss girl, charmingly lively, yet modest and politely diffident, by what little I observed, and I really think she will be a very delightful companion for my aunt, if the gloomy Abbey does not instil too much of the penseroso, for ’tis a wretched dull place and would soon give me the horrors.”

“ My aunt tells me she is the daughter of some humble friend of yours, on whose decease you was appointed guardian : Fortunate orphan ! to have the protection of so benevolent a man : Excuse me, Sir, nor think me guilty of adulation, you have ever evinced yourself the best of fathers, and my heart would be ungrateful not to acknowledge your worth.”

“ She is, alas ! the child of misfortune in every sense,” answered the Marquis, se-

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cretly rejoicing to have extracted the sentiments of his son, "but I shall take care of her with the anxious solicitude of a parent, 'till I can marry her to some worthy and amiable man deserving her affection, and guided by her inclination: But don't you think her pretty?" added he, darting a penetrating look, if possible to confuse him.

"Humph, yes," answered the cautious Edwin, "tolerable; what can you expect in fact from a complexion exposed to the beams of the meridian, or the keen blasts of the mountainous climate, unguarded by the shades of art or fashion, to repel those extremes so pernicious to a delicate skin; all the beauty Rosalie can boast is the glow of health, that she eminently possesses, and nature has certainly traced her pencil in the purest bloom to animate her cheek, like the wild rose exposed to each inclement ray, still boasting loveliness and purity, while the rude wind that whistles round its head bends with severity its feeble stem, but cannot divest it of its charms: Yet I do not wish to call her handsome, her amiability of disposition will sufficiently endear her to those whose generous and feeling hearts participate her fate."

The Marquis now left him with a mind relieved from suspicion, and festivity presided the evening circle, 'till Lord Edwin ordering Carlos to unpack his portmanteau,

delivered his father a letter from his friend at Paris, informing him his son could not sail for India with Lord Edwin, as proposed, from some particular occurrence, and therefore totally declined the voyage. This was a second annihilation to the Marquis's projects, and fullen and dejected he retired to rest.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE morning brought a number of friends to the Castle, to congratulate Lord Edwin's return, and inquire how soon he intended to sail on his Indian expedition, amongst them was the Duchess of Albemarle, and her daughter Lady Cecilia Bouverie, to whom the Marquis's partiality of genealogy hoped to command the affection of Lord Edwin, as his future bride.

She was too tall to be elegant, her countenance pallid and uninteresting, her disposition haughty, and her partiality to the follies of dress extravagantly outre; yet to these imperfections was the Marquis totally blind; to unite the blazoned escutcheon was his sole wish, and, alas! the finer feelings of sensibility were eclipsed by the

dazzling allurements of grandeur, even founded on the basis of total disregard; he thought the sacrifice of happiness amply substituted by the idolatry such splendour would revert on his family from the anticipated alliance; love had lost its potent charm in his bosom, the flame was extinct that once blazed, with the spirit of congeniality, and now the corroding worm of insatiate ambition supplied its place. Fatal tyrant! whose uncontrolled power sways every precept; love shrinks from thy baneful influence, pity dissolves in tears at thy predominance, while friendship half withdraws the extended hand of unity, and suspects a lurking thorn concealed beneath the blooming yet fallacious rose of happiness; every virtue is imprisoned by this despot, in its deep recess: But for thy influence the venerable Tankerville was the tenderest parent, the most faithful friend, and generous benefactor. His pillow was this night strewn with the sharp thorns of suspicion and vexation, which every reminiscence served but to augment, and his sleepless eyes were languid and heavy when he descended to breakfast.

After the repast was ended Lord Edwin was summoned to the library, and the Marquis developed the burthened secret that rankled in his bosom, by declaring his sentiments in favour of Lady Cecilia, and earnestly recommending such consideration to his son.

Lord Edwin unwilling to believe at first, rallied the subject, 'till silenced by a stern look from the Marquis.

"Ah! my dear Sir," said he, respectfully taking his hand, "Edwin avows his real sentiments when he declares, Lady Cecilia boasts no charms to captivate his affection, love alone must bind the fetter that retains his heart; yet, rest assured, prudence, honour, and virtue shall unite the rosy links of his bondage, when inclination solicits the sacrifice at the shrine of fidelity, and parental affection smiles an approving consent; yet, I beseech you never ask me to bestow that heart on Lady Cecilia, while its inmost feelings reject with painful anxiety its inability to retaliate a mutual impression."

"You are resolved then never to comply," said the irritated Marquis.

"Never while my soul revolts could I be the impious wretch to violate the sacred oath recorded on the page of futurity, under the specious sanction of pretended love, while duplicity alone veiled my disgust."

"Enough, enough," answered the enraged parent, "seal your lips on the subject, nor dare invade my ear with your high flown phrases more; yet remember, the hour you disobey my wish, by uniting yourself without my approbation, shall disinherit you from every possible source of fortune I can curtail: Retire and reflect

on the obstinacy of your refusal, and when reason cools your heated imagination you may probably relent, and study my happiness as well as your own interest."

Lord Edwin conscious of the stability of sentiment he had just professed, bowed and withdrew.

The Duchess and Lady Cecilia were unfortunately invited to dinner, which was no small embarrassment to Lord Edwin after the subject just discussed; the ceremony of dinner being ended without any particular occurrence, the Marquis proposed an evening ride, and as the Duchess's landau had brought her to the Castle, it was proposed to accommodate the Marquis, Lady Adela, and herself, while Lady Louisa mounted Sir Henry's phaeton, and the Marquis ordered his son's curricule to convey him and Cecilia purposely through mortification: Lord Carlton and the Honourable Frederic Waldegrave mounted their horses; Sir Henry was to lead the way, the curricule followed, and the landau and horsemen brought up the rear.

Lord Carlton's horse had not proceeded above two miles when taking fright at a water-mill it conquered the skill of the rider and threw him. Lady Adela, who saw the inevitable danger, shrieked and fainted on the Duchess's shoulder, and the whole cavalcade instantly stopped; the Duchess's salts were successfully applied,

and Lady Adela revived amidst the confusion of catching the furious animal, who was now too mettlesome to mount, and at the earnest desire of the Duchess and Lady Adela he agreed to take his seat in the landau, though much wishing to continue his equestrian exercise, but to calm the terror of the ladies who so earnestly entreated his forbearance, his polite condescension obediently adopted their plan, and the vicious steed was to be led by the servants.

Lady Cecilia, whose companion had probably not entertained her on the most pleasing or interesting subject, tired with his non-chalance, determined to mortify herself no longer, but put her resolution of quitting her seat in practice, and thereby convince herself of the reality or fallacy of her suggestion, not doubting from his cool insipid behaviour her company was totally indifferent to him, and begged to exchange her seat with Lord Carlton, as one of the curricie horses had become very mettlesome since the rapid flight of the other, and declared her agitation would not permit her to go any farther.

Lord Edwin secretly rejoicing at her riddance, instantly offered his hand to alight, assuring her, he was apprehensive of the animal's becoming rather unruly. Lady Cecilia suffered him to lead her to the carriage, into which she hastily jumped,

and took her seat by the Marquis's side, who much chagrined, told her, he wished she had kept her station, as she would have had a finer view of the prospect he wished to shew her.

"Oh dear," replied she, "I have seen none yet worthy of admiration, and Lord Edwin complains of the head ach, which, of course, rendered our gossip very insipid; I detest to hear of ennui, much more endure it, it vapours me to death in five minutes, therefore I thought it best not to increase it by my chat, so we have not uttered more than a monysyllable each this half hour, I through compassion to his brain, and he through inability of subject or inclination, and I never admire statuary you know," adding a sarcastic laugh.

"If these horses should grow unruly," said Lady Adela, raising herself to watch their prancing, "poor Lord Carlton may experience a second fall, and as I have no fears on the subject, I can go with my brother and accommodate him with my seat."

"Not for the world," replied the voice of Lord Carlton, at the carriage wheel, while Lady Adela glowed like crimson.

"Surely," returned the Marquis, "the men are most proper objects to encounter difficulties, and if any should arise Providence by *your* prayers will preserve them no doubt."

The strong emphasis laid on *your* prayers, uttered ironically, silenced the deeply

interested Adela; and Lady Louisa and Sir Henry were in fact the only real enjoyers of this intended pleasure. Lady Cecilia found no beauties to commend in the view she had been brought to observe; dissatisfied and peevish every object increased her disgust, and lolling on the Marquis's arm with vacant stare, she just deigned to acknowledge a beautiful natural cascade that heightened the charms of a picturesque view, was "Pretty enough."

"Insensate!" thought Lord Edwin, as he handed her to the carriage, "How would Rosalie's eye have wandered o'er this charming spot, and discovered a thousand beauties my perspicuity had never remarked, while this insipid mortal finds no perfection from the circle of her toilet, nor acknowledges a beauty she does not conceive centered in her own imaginary elegance."

Carlton sat lolling home in the curricule, musing on the energy of Lady Adela's solicitation, to brave the apparent danger, and resign her safer seat to him.

"Moralizing Mentor!" said Lord Edwin.

"Yes," answered he, "on human virtues in their most captivating form."

"And I on human frailties in their most formidable and disgusting view; thus we differ: I wonder which reflection will turn to most advantage."

“That we must profit by on mature investigation,” replied Lord Carlton, “every vice has its moral, from which we may improve as prudence and inclination shall direct, did we always associate with the amiable part of mankind we should be at a loss to preserve ourselves from the snares and corruption of the evil disposed, and fall a prey to their ingenuous duplicity, under the specious sanction of candour and virtue; morality is the most interesting, yet least observed study of nature, and thus it is we entail calamity by the impositions daily practised on credulity; but what shall we say of the man whose view of vice is shaded only by a veil, whose texture is thinner than the finest gauze, if he obstinately fears ’tis too much trouble to examine the picture, by raising the film that obscures it, and therefore trusts to the judgment and honour of some bye-stander to explain its properties, as best suits his own digested plan: Such a character is surely as pitiable as it appears contemptible, and dear bought experience too soon convinces him he has become the dupe of artifice when too late to retract.”

“Bravo,” exclaimed Lord Edwin, “I shall record these sentiments with a golden pen, on the tablet of friendship, thou excellent monitor.”

Various subjects ensued ’till they reached the Castle, and Lord Edwin, though very

polite, could not obtain one smile from Lady Cecilia, he was not the man of gallantry to her taste, and she therefore hastened the Duchess's departure, as early as possible.

Lady Adela had one morning retired alone to the pavilion, and Lord Carlton accidentally soon after bent his steps to the same spot, but finding the door fastened, he ventured to tap, and Lady Adela imagining it one of the servants, laid down her crayon and turned the key, when opening the door Lord Carlton appeared on the steps, and she started with surprise.

"I hope I do not disturb you," said he.

"No," replied Lady Adela, much flurried, and cautiously drawing a paper over a slight sketch she had just made, placed it in the drawer, but unfortunately the lock would not turn, and Lord Carlton offered his assistance.

"Something prevents its shutting," said he, and pulling it open, the paper slipped from the drawer and discovered his own picture; but with the greatest presence of mind he avoided disclosing his surprise, and shutting the drawer turned and presented the key to Lady Adela, who, unconscious he had seen it was perfectly collected: Not so the bosom of Lord Carlton, who had not wanted this proof to confirm his suspicions and utmost wish, and he now determined to gain the advice of Lord Ed-

win, and solicit him to reveal his design to the Marquis; 'twas now the fortunate moment of explanation, and he determined to improve it, as Lady Adela had so charmingly revealed her own secret when least intended.

CH A P. XIX.

ROSALIE in the mean time was become the Angelic Divinity of the Abbey, beloved by Lady Mentorina with the affection of a parent, and adored by every soul who knew her; once she had created an alarm amongst the peasants on the shore, by strolling one evening to the cliff with her lute, whose soft and dulcet note just reached their ear in faintest sound, and brought them from their suppers to listen; she was seated on the cliff, and being dressed in white the reflection of the moon on her countenance gave her a palid appearance, and justified the express idea of an apparition: The alarm soon spread, unknown and unheard by Rosalie, who deeply occupied in musing on a very different subject, suddenly rose and turned away, while the cottagers variously gave their opinions on the wonderful appearance,

while timidity instilled innumerable conjectures as the elevation of the cliff prevented distinct observation, and before they had time to discover what it could be, the figure vanished.

Lady Mentoria was writing in her study when Rosalie returned, and not wishing to disturb her, she thought the moonlight so inviting that she bent her steps to a large balcony, on the flat part of the Abbey roof, between the battlements; it was formerly erected to command the prospect, but had been seldom visited for many years past; the door that led to it at the end of the gallery having been accidentally discovered by Rosalie, she had chosen this opportunity of exploring the boundary, and therefore strolled out to gratify her curiosity.

Here she amused herself half an hour, and then descended to the parlour, where Lady Mentoria willing to amuse her, rung the bell, and ordered her attendant to fetch down a port-folio of maps, and an old terrestrial globe from a lumber-room in the East wing of the Abbey.

Martha took the keys but turned pale as death. "Thomas, or Austin, can help me to bring it down, my Lady, I suppose?" asked she, while the keys jingled from the tremulous motion of her hand.

"And why not go alone?" said her Ladyship, "you know the room."

"Yes, my Lady, but then I must pass the door that leads to the balcony."

"Well, what of that?" replied Lady Mentoria.

"Oh, the ghost!—Indeed, indeed, Madam, Austin and I was walking in the court-yard this very evening, and we saw, by the light of the moon something as white as snow whisking between the battlements, without a head; I am sure I was not deceived, for though our folks have often said that wing of the Abbey was haunted, I never believed such nonsense 'till now my eyes have convinced me; and Austin watched it, and put on his spectacles, but he could not make it out."

"My good Martha," said Rosalie, laughing heartily at her description, "Do not alarm yourself, for I was the formidable ghost without a head, upon my honour; but I am sorry my innocent walk should have created such unnecessary terrors."

Martha grew instantly composed. "To be sure, Madam, I was scared out of my wits, for I had not been in our hall talking above five minutes, before in comes William, who had been round to the cottages on the shore to order some fish, so says he, this is a long-legged ghost, it has made good haste, for our fishers saw it a-top of the cliff, not an hour ago; 'tis a merry one too, for they said they heard music in the

air at the same time, and all the women and children scampered into the cottages frightened to death."

"Ah!" said Rosalie, "I wandered there too, and thus the mystery is unfolded, therefore assure yourself you may safely venture up stairs for you will see no more ghosts there this evening, and do me the favour to remove the prepossessed ideas of your associates, by revealing the truth."

Martha now quite satisfied, tripped up stairs with a light heart, doubly invested with courage, and Lady Mentoria enjoyed the jest at her expence.

Rosalie, to oblige her friends at the Castle, penned the following stanzas during her seclusion at the Abbey, in her lonely morning and evening strolls; 'twas a charming romantic spot, but her fancy now depicted its desolated decay at a future period of a half century's ravage on its Gothic pile; and Lady Mentoria much pleased with the production of her youthful poetess, treasured the manuscript in her cabinet.

THE DESOLATED ABBEY.

As musing fancy guides me o'er the lawn,
When moonlight beams upon the mould'ring tow'r,
I take my pensive seat by some rude thorn,
On which once bloom'd the blossom's pallid flow'r.

Alas ! luxuriant scenes, by fancy chang'd,
Methinks I view thee crumbling o'er the earth,
Where in these foliag'd groves so oft' I've rang'd,
And watched of every rose the genial birth.

When rural elegance some fete compos'd,
Oft' have I join'd the sprightly roundelay;
In rich pavilions sweetly have repos'd,
And tasted banquets sumptuously gay.

Here stroll'd at day-break with my fav'rite lute,
Midst od'rous shrubb'ries exquisite perfume,
When ev'ry sound save echo'd plaint was mute,
And zephyrs wafted fragrance from the bloom.

Here if some wand'ring wretch, the child of fate,
Told his sad tale and humbly ask'd relief,
No surly menial drove him from the gate,
Humanity beguil'd the tear of grief.

Methinks yon tott'ring tower's turret peeps,
Through twining ivy fragments rude project,
Prolific round each battlement it creeps,
As if the poor remainder to protect,

Now where th' historic page depicted gay,
In beauty trac'd on the transparent pane,
Will shatter'd drop neglected to decay,
And cobweb films alone their place retain.

The noble hall too, by the helmets grac'd,
And cheerful horn which oft' blithe echo rung;
Midst antient warriors stately portraits plac'd,
As mould'ring trophies be neglected hung.

And damps exhaling from the dreary wall,
O'er faded tap'stry their rude marks will leave,
Thus desolate in ruin will it fall,
Of every former elegance bereav'd.

When gloomy midnight veils departed day,
The screech-owl refug'd in some dark recess,
Will hail the circling bat who wings her way,
To some more fav'rite niche frequented less.

Then fancy raises the chimeric tale,
That some pale spectre nightly haunts the tow'r;
Firm in the village such reports prevail,
Where superstition combats ev'ry pow'r.

Such tales related every peasant hears,
Where if the Abbey he must pass at eve,
Ideal fancy added to his fears,
Presents some phantom which his thoughts conceive.

Alas! could ev'ry heart with truth assert,
Its virtues pure as those this mansion own'd,
How blest 'twould be to share their real desert,
By meriting the tears their mem'ry mourn'd.

Embosom'd 'midst the drooping fir and pine,
With solemn cypress and dark mournful yew,
Methinks the tombs of ancestry reclines,
In drear mausoleum neglected too.

Here would I stroll then to the solemn shade,
Indulging pensive thought to friendship dear,
Pluck the last blossoms 'ere their beauty fade,
And consecrate them with a heart-sprung tear.

To these sad wilds I'd sigh a last farewell,
And then reluctant quit each well known haunt,
With grief each bubbling stream would seem to swell,
And solitary bend the drooping plant.

While the park-gate with hideous grating slam,
Will seem to bid exclusion to each foot,
Where the gay foliag'd oak that screen'd yon lamb,
Will leave no trace except its knotted root.

Off' have I sat beneath its spreading shade,
While to my lute some lark has warbled sweet,
When in full elegance surrounding glade,
Their native beauties blushed in this retreat.

The well-known bench too moss will over creep,
And where each rose in gay luxuriance hung,
Rude tangling weeds will proud dominion keep,
And nettles group the spot where blossoms sprung.

Disrob'd the forest and the ravag'd vale,
I scarce a path or avenue shall trace ;
For where the elm now rustles in the gale,
Prolific briars will supply its place.

Wild-berries clust'ring on its straggling thorn,
Will then remain to mark the shrubb'ry's bound ;
O'ergrown with weeds the solitary lawn,
To mem'ry scarce 'twill prove its high renown.

The dreary thought my sinking heart appals,
And tremblingly I quit the fancied gloom ;
Alas ! like this each human fabric falls,
And gradual sinks oblivious in the tomb.
Majestic ruin ! noble in decay,
Thy fame shall live when thou art sunk away.

A few days after a severe touch of the gout attacked the venerable Dowager, who constantly at those periods repaired to the Castle, for the particular attendance of a favourite physician, in consequence of which they immediately sat out, travelling by short stages 'till they reached the Castle on the third evening.

Miss Villars was that day on a visit to the ladies, when the invalid arrived, and Lord Edwin flying to the carriage, assisted the Dowager to alight, while his countenance could scarce assume the semblance of sorrow due to the sufferings of his aunt, as Rosalie followed Lady Mentoria into the parlour, supported between her nephew and Montague. Lord Edwin's chair stood vacant by the side of Miss Villars, but was instantly removed to the opposite one between the Dowager and Rosalie.

Miss Villars's eyes were fixed on the transient exchange, while Rosalie had attentively observed the situation of the vacated chair. "Upon my word, you are an excellent nurse, and indeed shine superior in that character to any other," said the imperious Amazon.

"I always was," replied Lord Edwin, "Lady Mentoria will vouch for me, I have frequently devoted my evenings to backgammon, for her amusement, while my sisters have joined some juvenile party in the neighbourhood."

"A fine compliment to the belles and beaus," rejoined Miss Villars.

"A proof at least of the young man's humanity and condescension to an old woman, neglected by the youthful part of her own sex, afflicted with an infirmity heaven may in time retaliate on them."

"I hope I shall never have the gout," answered the haughty fair, "or at least if I have, I hope my ill temper will never add to the trouble I shall then be to every body."

"It must undergo a thorough and speedy reform," replied the offended invalid, "for the impetuosity of youth will never be softened by the infirmities of age; it will trebly augment peevishness, not diminish it, depend upon it, young lady."

Rosalie, hung tenderly over her chair, endeavoured by a thousand little stratagems to alleviate the pain, and divert her attention, while Miss Villars turning on her heel with half a smile, asked Lord Edwin, if he was too much occupied to take a stroll for the benefit of the air.

"Ah, do," cried Lady Mentoria, "and take Rosalie with you, it will revive her after the confinement of a close carriage." Lady Adela joined the request, and Lord Edwin escorted them.

Lady Mentoria now asked the Marquis if he had any objection to Rosalie's remain-

ing at the Castle, or if he chose she should return.

“No,” replied he, “let her stay, I think I have probed the heart of Edwin, and found no wound to penetrate, I am therefore easy on that subject.”

The evening passed merrily away and Rosalie retired to a new apartment facing the portico of oranges, the evening was fair and clear, myriads of diamonds studded the azured veil of night, and fragrant odours embalmed the breeze, when something lightly tapping at her window called her attention, and she opened the sash, when a small note, fastened to a string, was thrown up and reached her hand; it was Lord Edwin, whose billet earnestly entreated she would allow him half an hour's chat in the pavilion, by seven o'clock.

Rosalie nodded assent but spoke not, shocked at his temerity, as Lady Mentoria's chamber joined hers, and he might have been discovered, she therefore closed the blind and prudently withdrew.

CHAP. XX.

THE Dowager recovered from her slight attack, and was persuaded to pass a month at the Castle, during which time Rosalie

improved rapidly in her drawing and music, and her soft melodious voice was to give its first specimen of delight at a private concert, performed at the Castle; numerous friends and neighbours were invited, and among the rest the Honourable Frederic Waldegrave paid his first visit since Rosalie's arrival: Struck with the charms of her person, he lost his usual sprightliness in the pleasing contemplation, and was her constant shadow the whole evening, while Lord Edwin, who silently observed his motions, was deeply concerned and much agitated.

Lady Louisa presided at the grand piano forte, Lady Adela exquisitely touched her harp, Lord Carlton performed on the violoncello, and Lord Edwin took his animating mellifluous flute, while Sir Henry flourished the sprightly horn, and two strangers subjoined their enlivening violins, Rosalie chose the fantastic tamborine, and two songs, with an inimitable charming composition, adapted for her favourite lute, constituted her share of the performance; she was purposely habited in the Savoyard style, and captivated every beholder; her beautiful solo on the lute received unbounded applause, and when she dropped it negligently by her side, Waldegrave instantly caught and applied it to his lip.

"Do you play, sir?" said the sweet girl.

"No," replied he, "I am only endeavouring, like the bee, to extract the honey from the little cells, because those charming lips have pressed them."

Rosalie unused to adulation, felt herself at a loss to give a proper reply, and Lord Edwin coming towards them at the instant, happily relieved her embarrassment.

"Rosalie," said he, lay by your magic lute, your next enchantment will be a song."

"What is it?" asked Waldegrave, touching the leaves of a rose placed on her bosom, "The Mansion of Peace?"

"No," answered Lord Edwin, perfectly understanding the question, "that privilege is reserved for a chosen few; the song she favours us with is to aid the inspiration of Adela's harp, and will convince you 'tis not ill adapted to the soul of the enchantress."

He then led her to the orchestra, and whispered her to beware of Waldegrave's freedom, which he did not at present dare resent. The assembly observed a profound silence, and the beautiful Rosalie and elegant Adela drew forward and began Mrs. Crouch's favourite song in the Heiress; 'tis true, the warbler had often practised it, but to night she excelled every former attempt: The benignity of her countenance, and the forcible expression laid on every line, captivated each attentive auditor,

and a general whisper of praise buzzed in every part of the room.

Waldegrave roused from his enchanting reverie with a profound sigh, and again repeated his encomiums ; the Marquis passing at the moment pressed her hand, "you are a good girl, and have pleased every body."

"She has enchanted them!" replied Waldegrave, "every body as if inspired by magic, repeats but the name of this bewitching syren."

The Marquis astonished at this rhapsody, led him away, and the evening passed cheerfully on, but the succeeding day brought Waldegrave to the Castle, on some frivolous pretence, while Lord Edwin was airing, and Rosalie was unfortunately alone in the pavilion, finishing a small drawing, while the ladies had retired to dress. Waldegrave delighted beyond expectation, seized the happy moment to explain his raptures, offered her his hand and fortune, and assured her of his unalterable attachment,

"Silence, Mr. Waldegrave," said she, withdrawing her half-devoured hand, "you honour me too far, reflect for a moment to whom you are imparting your sentiments, bordering surely on unguarded extravagance; I must not, dare not, believe them the deliberate effusions of sincerity, surely they must be the uncontrouled suggestion

of the moment, mere inspirations of gallantry, yet however devoid of propriety, are, I trust, founded on the basis of honour."

"Perfectly so, charming Rosalie, nor time nor absence shall erase the faithful fond impression, tell me then lovely angel, if Waldegrave's hopes may live in thy bewitching smile; or, doomed to meet thy frown, must he resign that treasured heart to some more happy rival?"

"Alas!" said Rosalie, "I boast no heart to give, 'twas lost in the peaceful vale of Chamouny, 'ere I knew these plains."

Waldegrave turned pale, his lips trembled, his hand grew cold as he grasped hers:—"Ah! tell me then," said he, "whose bosom guards the inestimable treasure, and I will fly to hear the tale, where if I find him, as perhaps I may, unburthened with the gifts of fortune, my ample purse shall well supply the same deficiency, 'till it has rendered his more humble roof completely worthy of so fair an inmate; then may I live to hear my Rosalie is blest, and Waldegrave, wretched Waldegrave, asks no farther recompense."

He now turned from her to hide the manly tear that flowed in spite of every effort to retain it; and Rosalie, stung to the soul, remained a perfect statue of astonishment."

“Permit me to retire,” said she, in a low and tremulous voice, “unable from the overflow of gratitude to thank you as I ought, and incapable of expressing what my lips would fain utter; yet, may every blessing, every tranquil joy surround you, and may the heart your fondest love shall chuse, return with equal rapture and sincerity thy matchless generosity and affection, while the poor humble Rosalie shall waft her purest prayer to heaven for your felicity—wretched boon I grant, but ’tis the sacred incense of a heart that would give more if love and honour did not hold it captive.”

“Generous girl!” answered the still more enraptured Waldegrave, “And must I resign thee? Oh! cruel fate: Yet tell me, I beseech you, the name of my rival, and I will cherish the envied robber with the affection of a brother, while he returns the fond caresses of my Rosalie, but if a shade of flight, however transient, cross the sun-shine of thy happiness, then Waldegrave’s arm shall plunge a dagger in the monster’s heart, and free the angelic sufferer from his frown.”

Rosalie shuddered with horror, for his countenance during this energetic speech had assumed every fury of real sensation. “We must meet no more then,” said she, “you grow furious, ask no further ques-
tion.”

ons, I beseech you, but leave me to my fate."

"Never, 'till you tell my rival's name and residence, that I may accomplish my promise," rejoined Waldegrave.

"That I cannot reveal at present, I have cogent reasons, but when time shall develop my fate, the heart that claims the humble Rosalie's, shall generously own, and strive to imitate the excellent virtues and gratitude of a Waldegrave; Adieu then, I must fly to my chamber, or my length of absence will create suspicion."

"Adieu too lovely Rosalie, a few days will convey me to the asylum of a faithful friend, whose tender admonition will console my wounded peace." Once more he kissed her hand, and darting through the shrubbery with the air of a maniac, mounted his horse, which he had fastened to a tree at the entrance of the park, and retired unseen by any soul.

Rosalie was transfixed to the gate over which she had leaned, her eyes filled with tears, her hands clasped and raised to heaven in silent ejaculation, when the sound of Sir Henry Lansdowne's phaeton roused her lethargic stupor, and turning quickly back into the house she entered her own apartment, where the most painful reflections agitated her palpitating heart. "I must assume duplicity at the expence of discretion," sighed she, "for should the

tale ever be revealed, what misery might it not entail on such a dreadful discovery to Lord Edwin! O, heaven avert it; already he observes the partial praises of Waldegrave with the keen eye of suspicion, and strictly repels them: Fatal secret! repose then in my bosom, where I will cautiously guard thee, and all will yet be well."——

"All did I say? Alas! no—poor Waldegrave, where wilt thou find the balm to heal a wounded heart? Not on the frozen mountain—not on the burning sands of India—nor in the fostering clime of peaceful happy England; for, Oh! no balsam can extract the venom, bloom in what soil it may!"

Her eyes had lost their usual lustre, when she descended to dinner, and Lord Edwin observed it, but Rosalie assuring him he was mistaken, and assuming a gaiety of heart foreign to her feelings, it all passed off.

CHAP. XXI.

A FORTNIGHT elapsed and Waldegrave had never appeared at the Castle, when a morning visit from Miss Villars, the chronicle of the vicinity, proclaimed his departure.

"So Waldegrave has left his mansion suddenly, on a trip to his friend Ellers, at Lime Park, and the beautiful eminence that overlooks Rose Vale is put in immediate design, several workmen are employed, and as I passed, seeing them very busy, I asked for what the structure was intended. 'Why 'tis for a hermitage, Ma'am,' says a grey-headed shrivelled old man, 'his Honour intends it to be very curious and complete, he has given us orders to proceed in the outer work, and then he will lay out his plan as his fancy strikes him.'"

"Why this is quite a new whim," said I.

"O dear yes, my Lady," continued he "and it will be a vast *solontory* place, I told his honour the birds would make pretty free, for there's a power of all sorts thereabouts; O, says he, never trouble yourself about them, their company will amuse me, and their song will amply repay their intrusion."

"Why yes," says I, "your honour, was always good natured to every body, but you will have a few songs from the rooks as well as the larks, and that mighty dismal."

"That too I shall equally enjoy," replied he, "so don't disturb them if they hover about."

"It is a mighty odd notion we think, but to be sure we have only to obey orders."

“ Thus ended the elegant harangue, and I rode off ; don't you think it a fine romantic scheme ; what a blooming hermit he will be, Lord Edwin, suppose we make a formal visit.”

“ Never disturb the reveries of solitude,” answered Lord Edwin, “ fan the flame of his inspiration, by all means, 'twill turn to good effect no doubt, when so young a man gratifies the bent of such recluse inclinations.”

Rosalie, who had listened to every syllable uttered by Miss Villars's shrivelled old man, as she maliciously stiled him, was at no loss to comprehend the mysterious enigma. “ He is then in reality,” thought she, “ and the fatal impression is to be nursed in the shades of solitude, where it will never be erased.”

Lord Edwin surmised some secret scheme actuated Waldegrave's design : Naturally of a careless lively disposition, could youth like his assume the careful brow, and woo the shades of seclusion, inventing every penforoso embellishment to complete the solitary structure : What turn the fervent page of enthusiastic reflection by the pale gleamings of a melancholy lamp, when revelling and mirth had ever led him captive in her jocund train, amid the alluring charms of love and beauty ? Immured within this lonesome cell, he must then pour the votive prayer to some peculiar

deity, however he would keep his sentiments private, and watch the event, as some slight suspicion from his conduct to Rosalie had awakened a dormant spark of mistrust, yet to doubt the purity of her heart on the subject was an idea consigned to perpetual oblivion, for he conceived the chain of honour and affection too firmly bound for the utmost strength and ingenuity to lose.

Rosalie had written an affectionate letter some time since to Madelon, and this day received an answer from her favourite friend, fraught with the faithful and kind remembrance of every cottager in the vale, and Lindor had inclosed a rustic sonnet, of his own composition, on the departure of Rosalie; the verse was simple yet interesting to her heart, 'twas a memorial of gratitude where least expected, and it expressed the genuine dictates of an honest worthy bosom, that had ever evinced a similarity of sentiment undisguised by duplicity; it was the first specimen of Lindor's poetical talents, and where an error required regulation, the effusion of sincerity it meant to express perfectly compensated; for untutored in the school of criticism, Lindor presented it in its humble and native guise, relying on the lenity of the goddess, to whom his rustic muse had made her first oblation.

LINDOR'S SONNET.

ON THE

DEPARTURE OF ROSALIE FROM THE VALE OF CHAMOUNY.

Ah ! who shall hail the saffron morn,
Now lovely Rosalie is gone ?
Who tie the vine by cluster's bent,
On rugged steep where oft' she went ?
Who cull the flow'rs, or pluck the fruit,
Who sing so sweet to Lindor's lute ?
Alas ! the moon-light dance no more
Enlivens us at ev'ning hour,
And e'en our blitheft philomel,
Forgets her plaintive woe to tell :
The roses drooping wet with dew,
Now seem to mourn her absence too ;
The wand'ring Chamois piteous still,
Oft' seek her on each neighb'ring hill ;
Then disconcerted bleats his pain,
And slowly straggles back again :
Oft' when the story's simple jest,
Amuses 'till the hour of rest :
Alas ! fond mem'ry will review,
How swift the rosy moments flew,
When Rosalie endear'd each scene,
Fair Rosalie's Chamouny's Queen.

There was a certain pathos in these simple lines very pleasing to Rosalie, and she read them with the greatest emotion of de-

light ; the letter also express the earnest solicitation of Josephine in case her friend should ever marry, that she might come over to England and be her attendant : Madelon's tender tears had blotted many expressive sentences, dictated by her grateful heart ; and the prayers of Reuben and Giralbine for her health and happiness concluded this valued epistle.

Rosalie gave the letter and sonnet into the hand of Lady Adela, and Lord Edwin, as he perused them, smiled with tearful eyes at this proof of affection, while he traced in imagination every anxious eye peeping into the contents, willing to add a thousand tender expressions had the paper been capable of containing them.

"Gratitude always affects my eyes," said Lord Edwin, giving the sonnet and letter into the Marquis's hand, who had minutely watched his son's countenance during the perusal, "I wish your heart too was as susceptible of obedience," replied the Marquis, hinting at his son's refusal of Lady Cecilia, for alas ! the thorn of disappointment had secretly rankled in his heart ever since, but the extreme cautious behaviour of Edwin and Rosalie eluded every suspicion ; Lord Edwin, who did not wish Rosalie to understand the meaning of the address, bowed and left the room.

Lady Mentoria was to remain at the Castle for the ensuing winter, and Lord Ed-

win had taken a trip to London for a fortnight with Sir Henry Lansdowne ; the rich autumn was declining, the air grew sharp and frosty, but Rosalie never failed her constant ramble before breakfast, to supply the expected meal of five robins, who pecked the crumbs from her hand, and whom she always filed her plumaged pensioners ; employed in this delightful occupation of benevolent humanity, they soon grew tame, and would often perch on the nearest shrub, and repay her attention with a grateful song.

Having one day missed a favourite from the circle, and strolling in search of him to his well known recess, in an adjoining thicket she found the little hapless songster frozen by the inclemency of a severe frosty night, apparently dropped from a favourite thorn, and stretched on a mass of snow, from whose frozen surface it was impossible to extricate its feeble wings : Compassion gave a trickling tear to the sufferer's fate, and Rosalie in memory of him, dedicated an elegy as she sat pensively musing o'er his stiffened plumes and deploring his loss.

THE FROZEN RED-BREAST'S ELEGY.

The snow crown'd thorn its shelt'ring verdure lost,
The whistling tempest every leaf had cropt,
Each twig was spangled by the gelid frost,
And o'er the wither'd branch the Robin hop'd.

His orange breast with pendant brilliants shone,
His frozen wing refused its wonted aid,
No leafy nest or blossom solia'd throne,
Could give the little sufferer any shade.

The moon shone pallid on the drifting snow,
And faintly ting'd the pine-clad mountain's head ;
Loud from each cavern did the wild winds blow,
While ev'ry isicle refulgence shed.

On the lone spray my shiv'ring Robin clung,
Whose legs benumb'd could scarce support its
weight ;

His heart beat low, a plaintive note he sung,
A note portending his approaching fate.

Ah ! had but pity whisper'd in my ear,
Or accident reveal'd thy hapless fate:
To my warm bosom I had press'd thee near,
And strove thy tender life to renovate.

But as in search I stroll'd at early dawn,
'Ere the gay sun in glory had arisen,
Beneath the wither'd elm and fav'rite thorn,
My robin's life had left its plumag'd prison.

Now Rosalie shall with assiduous care,
Place the fond æriel in a grassy bed ;
And in fond mem'ry plant a blossom there,
To mark the spot that pillows robin's head.

Softly at eve, as passing through the vale,
I pause to listen at the well-known tree,
Where his companions plaintively bewail,
And seem to thrill his pensive elegy.

From this charming amusement she had one morning just entered the house, when Andrew met her in the hall. "A poor traveller is without, resting himself," said he, "he seems weak and feeble, so I asked him into the housekeeper's-room, but he refuses and is sitting near the great gate; he seems more unhappy than hungry, I think, for I offered him some victuals, but he shook his head and said he was only tired: He asked if the family were up, and I said no, only Miss Rosalie."

"Poor fellow!" said the sympathizing girl, "I will go and see if I can relieve him."

In a few moments they reached the bench on which sat a person wrapped in an old furtout and a flapped hat, an oak stick rested his hands, on which leaned his head in the attitude of profound reverie, 'till the airy footstep of Rosalie gently pattering on the gravel roused him, and he raised his head, but spoke not, for Andrew was close behind gazing stedfastly on him.

"Can I relieve you, friend?" cried the soft voice of Rosalie.

The traveller bowed, placed his hand on his bosom, and presented a small piece of paper, when Rosalie unfolding it read the following words.

"Pardon and commiserate the victim of despair, and allow five minutes conversation at the end of the south terrace to the

wretched Waldegrave; govern your surprise, impart a plausible relief, and follow the wanderer."

Twice did she read it to recover her agitation, when taking out her purse to aid the dissimulation, she gave him a crown which he thankfully received, and rising, took his immediate departure.

"Poor creature," said Andrew as he fastened the gate after him, "he was very modest, for he did not ask me to carry in *that there* petition for charity, so if you had not been up, Madam, he would have gone away almost as poor as he came, for I had but a few halfpence in my pocket, and that would not have made him much richer, God knows."

"It would not indeed," said Rosalie, "for he seemed no common beggar, only a child of misery, Andrew; but as I could not relieve his sorrows more fully I did not wish to hear his mournful tale."

"God give you his blessing, for you are all charity and goodness, sweet angel lady," muttered Andrew, as she tripped away to the terrace, where the disguised mendicant raising his hat, discovered the well known features of Waldegrave.

"Whence this cruel unguarded surprise, Mr. Waldegrave?" asked the fair trembler, leaning over the parapet while he seized her hand: "Beware," continued she, "the temerity of this intrusion, and

be also expeditious in what you have to disclose, that you may depart undiscovered before the family rise."

"I returned last night," said he, "to my desolate mansion, where I inspected my hermitage, but found it, like every thing else, devoid of the charms my fancy depicted: I shall now leave it in the course of a week, and bend my steps to London, where I have procured an India equipment, a few short weeks will conduct me to my solitary cabin, where, to the mercy of the winds and waves I commit this miserable form; the burning plains of India will be less scorching than my heated brain, and each will consume the other with greater precipitation: Will Rosalie, then, deign to breathe a prayer, amid the fury of impending storms that dash his hapless bark, or will she give one sigh to pity, as the trembling moon beams through her window, and recalls to mind the wretched Waldegrave watching the same pale luminary's midnight lamp, reclining o'er the lonely deck's vacated platform, while the rough mid-watch mariner, whose eye is alone unsealed aboard the vessel, whistles in plaintive strain the weary hour away, yet leaves despair and horror chained to me, whose pillow planted with remorseless thorns, the points of which are oft' bedewed with poignant tears, no longer rests his languid head, or soothes him to repose.

Adieu, angelic purity, to-morrow brings me to the Castle to take my formal leave—Ah! here could I linger all the live-long day, and sleep beneath the covert of these elms until Aurora lifts the torch of day, and with her rosy fingers opes the gates of morn, to cast a longing look of expectation, and behold thy lovely form, enchanting as the roseat hour, steal to this lonely spot, and give one smile, one glance of pity to the woes of Waldegrave.”

Rosalie’s tears had steeped her handkerchief in briny essence. “To-morrow then,” said she, “I shall see you again, Mr. Waldegrave, yet, believe me, if opportunity does not furnish me with the means of bidding you adieu as my gratitude would wish, I shall ever entertain the highest sense of the obligation your sentiments have avowed for me, yet, miserable must I ever be when I reflect on the cause that drove you from your happy mansion, the blest abode of tranquillity ere my unhappy fate guided me to this spot to tear that blessing from your bosom; yet, Oh! forgive the wretched girl, and strive to conquer an ill-fated love, which, circumstanced as I am, would surely be profane to hear: Be firm, be resolute, and submit to the decrees of fortune, suffer your wonted peace and happiness to return, and preserve your inestimable good spirits for the bene-

fit of all those most nearly concerned in your welfare."

The distant appearance of Le Brun obliged him to sigh, adieu, and disappear, as fast as possible, while Rosalie returned to the breakfast table, ill disposed to swallow a morsel.

CHAP. XXII.

LORD EDWIN and Sir Henry being in London, Rosalie was pensive, a thousand painful ideas engrossed her mind. Lady Louisa, in consequence of her swain's absence, became dull, and her charming sister could only alleviate their ennui, by chatting and rambling with Lord Carlton, the only remaining beau, whose engaging sensibility had so far gained the Marquis's favour, that he had readily acceded to his wish, by permitting the increasing passion to cement between him and Lady Adela, and the next spring was to confirm the happy union, as also the nuptials of Sir Henry and Lady Louisa, an event anticipated by the Marquis with the greatest delight, and his felicity had attained its summit, if Ed-

win too had accepted the hand of Lady Cecilia, but that was not to be, and a very different circumstance was reserved to prove the affection of the Marquis.

Several little parties had been formed to interest and amuse the lingering hours, when Frederic Waldegrave arrived at the Castle, and invited the family to partake a farewell dinner at the Manor, which was readily accepted by the Marquis, who earnestly enquired his motives for leaving England.

"I wish," said he, "Edwin would accompany you, but he is so bigotted to his Parisian friend, that because he declines going this year, no persuasion can induce him to make the trip."

"And probably I shall not stay long in the West," replied Waldegrave, "therefore I should only lead him astray, for I shall be a wanderer at large, where fancy or inclination directs."

Such a negligent reply silenced the Marquis's inquiry, and Thursday was the appointed day for the visit to the Manor. Rosalie dressed herself plain as possible, though she was convinced Miss Villars and every belle in the vicinity would endeavour to out-rival each other.

At four the company assembled, and were entertained with an elegant dinner, festivity and hilarity prevailed without alloy, and the evening being very inviting,

the Marquis proposed sailing on a fine canal, that ran through the extensive pleasure grounds; the sailing-boat was ordered out, and the party took their seats.

After an hour spent in the most agreeable manner, a threatening cloud presaged a violent storm, which soon veiled the atmosphere. Rosalie terrified, sunk on the shoulder of Waldegrave, and the company landed as fast as possible, and made the best of their way to the house, but as Waldegrave supported the trembling Rosalie, a vivid flash crossed the path, and again she sunk on his arm: Each gentleman fully employed with their respective charges, hastened on, all equally frightened, and saw not the relapse of Rosalie, who happened to bring up the rear, and Waldegrave, recollecting the hermitage to be but a few paces distant, bore her thither, and as it was probable the storm would increase, had endeavoured to prevail on the rest to take shelter in its recess—but in vain, as they thought best to retreat before the shower fell to prevent their flight, as they were at least a quarter of a mile distant from the house.

Waldegrave now carried his lovely burthen to the solitary structure, so lately completed, laid her on a couch, and flew to get some water, when supporting her head to raise it on his arm, a small pearl cross, confined by a ribbon, discovered itself on

her bosom; instantly Waldegrave slipped the string, and, purloining the treasure, secreted it in his own bosom, as the only memorial of her he should be able to obtain, instinctively he pressed it to his lips, and then consigned it to its future repository.

Scarce had he recovered the agitation of his secretion when Rosalie opened her eyes, and wildly inquiring where she was, expressed the greatest terror at her situation.—The hermitage grew dark, the storm increased, and Waldegrave soothed her fears by every tender assiduity: But, equally alarmed at being alone and subject to his addresses, she earnestly entreated to brave the storm and venture on.

“Impossible!” cried he, “it pours in torrents, patience, lovely Rosalie, you are perfectly safe; we shall soon be missed, and the servants will be sent to accomodate you with shelter of some kind, I cannot leave you alone or I would fly thither; be composed, I think I see somebody coming through the vista, but the flashes are so vivid I cannot discern who it is.”

A few moments brought Thomas and Gregory, with the family sedan, and a coat and umbrella for their master; for the company terrified at their absence, were fearful some accident had happened, and the fury of the tempest prevented any but the servants from coming to their assistance.

Waldegrave instantly placed her in the chair, and walked slowly by her side to pacify her fears; at length they reached the house and entered the drawing-room, where the party were assembled; every one but Miss Villars expressed their concern at Rosalie's indisposition.

"Was not the hermitage a mighty snug retreat," cried she, "I wonder Miss Rosalie should faint there; methinks in the protecting arms of Mr. Waldegrave there was little occasion to *affect* terror, for my part, I began to think you both inclined to pass the night there, 'twas devilish unlucky Gregory should think of the old mouldy sedan, to interrupt so charming a tete-a-tete.

"I conceive it a very lucky thought of Gregory's," answered Rosalie, "and feel myself much indebted to his civility and good nature."

"Had he been as maliciously disposed as the envious part of mankind," replied the Marquis, (leering at Miss Villars,) "he would not so readily have invented a burthen for his own shoulders; but I am sorry to see malice so expert in sharpening her arrows on a female lip, yet, I trust, the feathers they are fledged with are so light and frivolous, that though a breath sends forth a volley in every direction, they seldom wound; for, depend on it, the shield of innocence repels the misapplied dart,

and the disappointed archer feels the point retaliated with the venom of vexation to her own mischievous bosom."

Waldegrave's eyes thanked the Marquis most eloquently, while Miss Villars, smiling derision, yet compleatly and justly ridiculed, replied, he was an excellent monitor, but would probably meet with very few scholars from the severity of his precepts.

"And yet, I dare avow," rejoined the Marquis, "I shall very seldom have occasion to use my correction a second time if my pupils are as susceptible of the sting as I wish them to be, though I shall never inflict it improperly or undeserved."

Some of the ladies whispered, and some of the beaux smiled, for the subject had been most completely handled at the sole expence of Miss Villars, who, unable longer to support his severity, instantly took her leave, mortified to the soul, and determined never to pass another moment in his presence.

The storm now abated, and the carriages drew up to convey the company home, when Rosalie fastening her cloak missed her pearl cross, the gift of Lady Adela: confused and vexed an immediate search succeeded, but in vain, and Waldegrave assuring her every part of the grounds should be searched where it was probable

she could have dropped it, handed her into the carriage, and took a final leave.

On the second day he departed for London, where he met Lord Edwin, and Sir Henry, from whom he received every friendly wish of a prosperous voyage, and a few letters of recommendation to some friends of Sir Henry's in the West India settlements, and early in the following week they accompanied him on board, while Lord Edwin, as he quitted the ship's side, (from whose gallery Waldegrave waved his hat) found his heart relieved of a heavy suspicion that had long rankled there, grounded on the dread of rivalry.

CHAP. XXIII.

ROSALIE unsuspecting of the innocent robbery committed by the hapless wanderer, often regretted her loss, although the generous Lady Adela had supplied its place, with an elegant fancy medallion; little did she think that cross was daily bedewed with the tears of faithful love; lit-

'till she knew how oft' it pressed the feverish lip of hopeless passion, as it rested on the panting agitated bosom of despair.

Lord Edwin and his companion returned on the appointed day to the Castle, his countenance was cheerful as the finest summer's morn, his soul serene and happy as its softest balmy breeze. Rosalie was delighted at his return, yet a soft sigh sometimes heaved to the sorrows of Waldegrave.

The winter wore away its languid hours in the pleasure of agreeable society, sometimes shared at the Castle, or passed at the Abbey, and when the joyous spring peeped forth and smiled, Lady Mentoria conducted her young companion again to the Castle, for the summer recess. In its beautiful blossomed groves Rosalie and Lord Edwin often strolled in pleasing converse of an evening, when the fragrance of the blossom embalmed the breeze, and philomel, wild poet of the glade, thrilled her soft cadence half concealed, amid the mazes of her foliaged nest, while the majestic crescent encircled by her floating silver fluid, mantled the vagrant rill, and tinged the drooping elegance of numerous willows, sheltering the rose-fringed banks, and reflecting its sylvan beam on the enraptured countenance of Lord Edwin, 'as he gazed, the lustre of Rosalie's bewitching

eyes vying their contrast with its feeble ray.

“My Lord, the Marquis approaches,” whispered Montague, from a thicket of Seringo’s one evening, “turn through the shrubbery while I detain him.” Instantly they followed the admonition of their kind protector and escaped separately to the house.

The summer now drew on her rosy veil and shaded the retiring spring, who left her blossoms to the fostering hand of her maturer care, and Rosalie, Lady Adela, and Lady Mentoria had just returned from a visit at the Abbey, and all the little circle were again cheerful and happy; the caution of Lord Edwin, had eradicated every suspicion from the bosom of the Marquis, who, although not perfectly reconciled to his rejection of Lady Cecilia, loved his son too well to render him miserable by enforcing his commands, when a circumstance destined to unveil the long-secreted mystery, presented itself when least surmised.

The sultry sun of July had emitted an almost insupportable heat through the day, and with the shades of evening followed a succession of black clouds, impregnated with bituminous matter, deep streaks of red fringed their lowering inflamed edges, and foretold an approaching tempest.

The ladies alarmed at the excessive loud peals of thunder that soon followed, and the vivid flashes of blue lightning had retired to the inner apartment, less exposed to its direction, when a loud ringing at the lodge gate demanded attendance, and Montague announced the servant of a stranger earnestly soliciting assistance for his master, whose horse taking fright at the lightning, had thrown him with the greatest violence against a projecting rugged branch of an ancient oak that overhung the park railing, where he had been obliged to leave him in search of assistance, as he was unable to proceed; and to add to his misfortune, the horse had fled, but seeing a light in the Lodge it encouraged him to hope for some relief.

This sudden alarm created the compassion of the whole family, and three of the servants were instantly dispatched with orders to bring the stranger to the Castle, and when their voices in the hall announced their return, the parlour was instinctively vacated, and the whole family assembled.

The unfortunate man was of very genteel appearance, about forty years of age, totally inanimate, and half covered with blood, from a contusion in the side of the head. Lady Mentorina drew near to offer her advice and inspect the wound, while

the three beautiful girls, like benignant angels, stood weeping o'er the hapless sufferer, with upraised hands and countenances expressive of the deepest horror.

A surgeon was immediately fetched, though at the distance of five miles, and at Lady Mentoria's request the stranger was laid under the rich canopy of crimson velvet, in the state bed chamber, where life again revived with languid pulsation, but not the faculty of reason; that alas! seemed chained by heavy stupor, and he remained many hours in a state of torpid insensibility.

On the surgeon's arrival he pronounced the contusion dangerous, but not so near the brain as was apprehended, nor could he ascertain the consequences which might ensue; however, he hoped the best, ordered him to be kept in a state of perfect tranquillity, but declared that removing him would be of dangerous tendency. Mrs. Gertrude was deputed to sit by him, while his servant unpacked his portmanteau, and the Marquis could gain a little information of the rank and character of his invalid, but of this the domestic declared himself ignorant, he only knew his master's name was Spencer, and that he was just returned from the West Indies, had hired him about three weeks since in London, during which time he had resided at

an hotel, but was now on their tour to N—, at the house of some very intimate friend of his master's, from whence they were going to some part of Italy and France.

This account, though plausible, was by no means satisfactory, and as the servant proceeded to unpack, the delicacy and fineness of the linen, marked with the initials of E. W. created a suspicion of fallacy in the Marquis's breast, which he carefully concealed, and Gertrude resigned her situation to his own servant, and one of the Marquis's for the night, which was passed in tolerably tranquil slumber.

The Marquis, anxious to inquire the state of his guest, stole softly to his chamber in the morning, where, finding the door open, he ventured gently in, when he heard the voice of the stranger earnestly repeating the following soliloquy, and rested on tip-toe that he might not surprise or interrupt him: the voice sighed and thus proceeded.

“Sure 'tis illusion, or my eyes beheld the fair resemblance of my faithless love:—Angelic form! sweet placid innocence, if such thou wert, cast one soft smile of pity on the wretched Walsingham!—Adored Lavinia! Hapless victim of seduction, Ethelbert loved thee with unfeigned sincerity: Though thou wast base, perfidious, and contaminated by the breath of vile

iniquity : Cruel accursed Morency ! Impetuous injured Walsingham !”

The Marquis shuddered with horror, the name of Ethelbert Walsingham had been engraven on his heart, with a pencil of adamant, dipped in poison. He advanced one step and peeping through an aperture, in the curtain, beheld the feeble invalid raised from his pillow, his hands clasped in the attitude of imploring pardon, and his eyes fixed on a half length portrait of Lady Lavinia, which hanging immediately opposite the foot of the bed, convinced him of the reality of his suggestion, and, overpowered with confusion, surprise, and distress, the Marquis sunk on a chair, and, drawing aside the curtain, fixed his eager eyes on the stranger, whom he was unable to address at the moment.

“To whom, Sir,” asked the feeble man, “am I indebted for the compassion and indulgence I have apparently received, tho’ alas ! the suspension of recollection deprives me of the idea of what favour my hapless state has experienced ; I have dozed the night away, and just rousing from an irritated unconnected dream, I recall my scattered senses and find myself alone in the mansion of a stranger, whose benevolent humanity seems to have furnished me with every comfort in a style of elegance, I am by no means entitled to,

and the information of knowing to whom I owe such obligation will still add one more to the number."

"You are now in the Castle of the Marquis of Sevigne," replied the agitated Marquis.

"Sevigne!" reiterated the breathless stranger, "And that portrait Lady Lavinia his sister? Gracious heaven! do I in you behold the noble owner of this Castle too?"

The Marquis bowed assent, and the stranger continued:

"Alas! then let this devoted head sink in eternal slumber on your soothing pillow; fly me, for I have been a murderer, but, culprit as I seem, I yet shall sue your mercy. I could unfold a tale would harrow up your soul, if you will grant me but an hour's explanation, then wouldst thou spurn me like a miscreant from thy roof, I will not call thee harsh, I will not murmur."

A convulsive motion prevented his articulation, as he violently grasped the hand of the Marquis, but recovering he begged the door might be fastened to prevent interruption, and then proceeded.

"First draw the curtain," said he, "and veil that angelic face, my brain is frantic, and every sense disordered while I gaze on it."

The Marquis, softened by his agony obeyed, and begged him to proceed with composure.

CHAP. XXIV.

“I WILL endeavour to disclose the most minute circumstances; the painful task will cost me many a pang, but ah! gracious heaven, how many has it created you? Forgive thou peaceful soul, and seal my pardon with one word of comfort.”

A tear crossed the Marquis's cheek, and the stranger proceeded.

“Tis now near nineteen years 'ere I first visited the family of M. Tourville at Paris, where the accomplished and beautiful lady Lavinia captivated my heart. A native of England, but bred from my infancy on the confines of India, of noble parentage and good fortune, I had left my parental home to visit the shore of England, from thence I bent my hapless course, alas! to France, recommended by an intimate friend to the

notice of M. Tourville, I became almost an inmate of his hospitable mansion: Need I tell you, it was impossible to behold this angelic woman without eternally wearing her chains—to me they were rosy fetters, and while she smiled upon my hopes, life could not boast a higher blessing; my fond heart doated to distraction, and I had the undescribable satisfaction of finding my affection returned with the most ardent sincerity, which was crowned by the nuptial benediction four months after my arrival, but as my birth and fortune were not equal to her's, the secret was reposed in the bosom of a sacred few, but carefully guarded from M. Tourville."

"Alas! at his house now visited the graceful and alluring Chevalier De Morency, whose partial glances, and, to me insolent assiduities never passed unnoticed: My angelic Lavinia firmly repelled the repeated insolences of this troublesome intruder, and had not the most obvious reasons prevented my disclosing my sentiments, and asserting the rights of my protection, a few days had probably happily ended the business; in vain did Lavinia conjure me not to be uneasy, adding, a few short weeks would convey us to India, should Lady Mentoria, her aunt, and the Marquis, her father, withdraw, as she much feared, their countenance from her, in

consequence of not having aggrandised, or united herself to some family equally illustrious with her own : For her sake then I remained silent, and her smile calmed all my fears and lulled suspicion to oblivion."

"A few days after, having occasion to go to Versailles, I left my beauteous bride, proposing to return on the third evening, and after receiving and imparting the most tender and faithful adieus, I set off, but scarce had reached my destination when a billet was delivered me, the bearer of which departed from the hotel an hour previous to my arrival, and was a total stranger. The hand was unknown and I hastily tore it open, when the following lines, now recorded on my heart, presented themselves."

"Fail not to return to Paris to-morrow evening, at the hour of nine, conceal yourself in the shrubbery near the temple, and witness the virtuous assignation of the Chevalier Morency, and the artful abandoned Lavinia :—Victim of duplicity, 'tis thine to punish."

"My blood froze with horror, my brain was on fire—could it be possible?—Ah! no, Yet love, honour, justice demanded me to attend the summons, and I obeyed, previously concealing a poignard to avenge my unmerited injury, should I discover the cruel fact."

"Punctual at the moment I arrived, disguised and concealed, I awaited the dreaded appearance, when through the branches of the trees I soon discovered the white robe of Lavinia, advancing by her side in all the rhapsody of love, walked the specious villain, one of whose arms encircled her waist, while the other grasped her hand to his lips: Lavinia, 'tis true, repelled the freedom, but as they passed I distinctly heard her utter these words. "Leave me, Chevalier, 'tis imprudent we should longer absent ourselves from the company, fly me, I conjure you, 'ere your presence is too fatal to us both; should Walsingham return and find you here, what misery might we not be involved in; you know my resolution, which neither time or circumstance shall make me break, and as you value the peace of Lavinia be discreet."

"But to-morrow," cried he, "will you suffer me to enjoy half an hour's chat in the morning?"

"Yes," answered she, "if you will swear never to betray your extravagant affection before Walsingham, nor give him the least cause for suspicion; away, then, your horse is waiting and I must return."

"Morency again pressed her to his bosom, and retired, while she strolled back heaving the deepest sighs, alas! too surely

for Morency, for to a mind inflamed as mine, every spark brightened to a blaze, and had I not heard sufficient to warrant my suspicion, and convince me of her baseness?"

"Instantly I darted from my concealment, and hurrying to my horse, rode on full speed to the confines of a thicket I knew he must pass, and as he entered alone, I seized his bridle, discovered myself, and demand restitution for my wrongs, but the sneering villain mocking my agony, asked me for whom Lavinia's heart most glowed with love? For whom she shed the pensive tear, or heaved that parting sigh, but for himself?"

"If 'twere indeed for thee, villain!" answered I, "thou never more shall boast; this to thy heart, an injured husband plunges but one poignard, while in his breast thou hast implanted thousands never to be extracted."

The fatal steel pierced his heart, and he fell lifeless at my feet, while furious as the agitated maniac, I mounted and galloped off, leaving the body exactly where it fell, to the fate that might await its discovery. Reflection, alas! soon convinced me I was a murderer, and the pangs of conscience were too acute to be borne."

"Imagining the alarm such a circumstance would occasion, I made the best of

my way to Calais, and that evening sailed in the packet for England, where I no sooner arrived than I wrote Lavinia, reproaching her with her perfidy, and confessing myself the executioner of Morency, and bid her an eternal adieu: Cruelly as she had treated me, my heart still relented so far as to infligate an idea of future provision for her, in case our union should be productive of a helpless and innocent victim, I therefore enclosed different sums to the amount of one thousand pounds, but what I suffered on the occasion is much easier felt than described, and I embarked for India in the course of a fortnight, but had no sooner reached my father's house than I was informed he had paid the debt of nature six weeks since, and he being a widower, of course his estates of every description fell to my possession; settling his affairs as expeditiously as possible, I was persuaded by an intimate friend and school-fellow to settle near him in the West-Indies, an offer I thankfully accepted, and he purchased in the most advantageous manner extensive plantations, and a proper number of slaves for me, and under his direction and advice every thing was conducted with the utmost regularity."

"I had now no method of inquiring the state of affairs in England for two years, when this estimable friend set off on a trip

for this hospitable shore, to his bosom I had confided my secret, and from his pen I received the following information. That M. Tourville had communicated the story to you, who had searched every part of England to discover my retreat; that Lavinia had given birth to a daughter, and had ended her days in penitence and sorrow soon after at Montpellier. The child, he added, was at nurse somewhere in Switzerland, under the care of M. Tourville, and I conceived I had fulfilled my duty in the provision I had advanced for its maintenance."

"Yet the spark of parental affection was kindled in my bosom, and urged by the impulse of nature, I determined repeatedly to come over to England, when by the intelligence of persons predetermined to subvert my intentions, I learnt, my infant had followed its mother to the bourn of tranquillity."

"My plantations were fruitful, my slaves diligent, yet the thorn of sorrow and remorse was not eradicated by the balm of prosperity, when a second voyage of my friend's, near fifteen years after, again revived my hopes, and 'ere the stern winter of life deprived me of my wonted ability to sustain the voyage, and reconnoitre every circumstantial event, I resolved to hazard the attempt of visiting Switzer-

land, and protecting my child, as indubitable authority from the pen of my friend assured me I was still a father, and my blooming offspring, who was the express image of her mother, was an humble resident in the cottage of Reuben Demouline, in the Vale of Chamouny. Bent on this project I was directing my course to the seat of my friend at N—, who would have accompanied me on my tour, when this dreadful accident befel me and left me an almost lifeless being at your hospitable gates.”

“Is it then the punishment I merit thus to be thrown on the mercy of an offended relative; or is it ordained by Providence I should be rendered the instrument of eclairsissement. Patient and attentively have you listened to my fate without the interruption of a single reproach; from Lavinia I had formerly heard of your residence, but believe me, as I passed the road I little intended to have intruded, or discovered myself, unpermitted by your kindness; as the victim of fate I implore your pity; the rashness of uncontrouled jealousy, the impetuosity of flighted love, once the most pure and fervent, led me, alas! to the pinnacle of desperation, for by heaven, an angel had not convinced me the detested information was a truth, if oral and ocular demonstration had not too sadly revealed the cruel fact.”

Here Walsingham burst into tears, and sunk on the pillow, while the Marquis giving him a glass of water, again took his seat.

“ You have, ’tis true,” said he, “ endeavoured to clear your mysterious conduct, and had but Lavinia lived she would have exculpated her innocence, and you might yet have been happy, but your rash cruelty inflicted too deep a wound to find a cure; alas! she pined in secret, and M. Tourville, to conceal it from the world, removed her to the cottage of his tenant Reuben, where she was delivered of a daughter, whom Giralbine nursed, but her health daily declining, she was removed to Montpellier, where the faded lily drooped and died.”

“ To have brought home the little Rosalie would have exposed my sister’s injuries, blazoned her misfortunes, and excited the calumny of every malicious tongue; and as I had faithfully promised her never to reveal the secret to my own family ’till time should elucidate your conduct. I simply told my aunt Lavinia had died of a consumption at Montpellier, nor does she at this moment know Rosalie is my niece; for seventeen years M. Tourville visited his little charge, and Montague, as my substitute, paid his annual visit, with the pension allotted her for her board, but on the

decease of M. Tourville, eighteen months since, I conceived it my duty to fetch her from this solitary recess, and confess myself her guardian."

"My indefatigable search of you proving fruitless, I determined leaving it to the sole direction of Providence; I have sacred papers by me shall soon convince you of her injured innocence, for, by Heaven, she was purity itself: Excuse the emotions of my heart, sacred to the memory and virtues of an adored sister, while for the sake of her lovely child now under my roof, I will strive to conquer my enmity to her fatally-misguided father; yet remember, your parental affection alone can induce me to cherish the man whom honour should teach me to abhor; and may Heaven in mercy pardon your errors, and reclaim your virtues, as you expect countenance from me. To-morrow, if the surgeon permits, you shall see your child, in the mean time I must develope the story to Lady Mentoria, as too sudden a surprise might endanger her health."

CHAP. XXV.

THE Marquis now left him and returned to the parlour, where he related as briefly as possible the whole occurrence.—Lord Edwin was all agitation: Rosalie, dissolved in tears, and would have flown to her parent's apartment while the lovely sisters sweetly soothed her woe, and breathed the sigh of pity to the sad, sad tale.

Lady Mentoria, who doated on her unhappy niece, felt the unexpected stroke of misery most poignant: "Lovely sufferer," exclaimed she, as she perused the explanatory letters of Lavinia, which the Marquis had consigned to her care, previous to delivering them to Walsingham, and though she possessed the firmest principle of humanity and commiseration for the distressed, a harsh invective at first escaped her lip, as she condemned the ferocity of Walsingham.

On the following morning Rosalie followed the Marquis to the chamber of the invalid, whose impatience would not be

pacified from embracing his child, although the surgeon pronounced any irritation would increase his fever, and protract the effect his aid tended to produce.

He was just risen when the lovely girl, scarce able to conceal her joy, entered his chamber, and flying to embrace him, sunk on her knees; a copious torrent of tears luckily relieved the full bosom of Walsingham, as he tenderly raised and embraced her.

"Alas!" said he, "is it thus I fold to my heart the angelic image of a dearer self? Here let me trace the blushing beauties of my sweet Lavinia, thou sole blest gift of Heaven:—Oh! her expressive eye still beams in thine, her dimpled smile yet lingers on thy rosy cheek, and thy soft dulcet voice recalls her animating tone. Distraction fires my brain—come to my arms, my dearest Rosalie, and let a father's penitential tear fall on thy bosom and erase the sad impression his impetuous crime has deeply written there; forgive my love, and deign to bless a miserable misguided father."

Rosalie clasped his hand, in silent agony, and pressed it to her bosom, "I will be all obedience, all affection, dearest Sir," said she, "and may you long live to trace in me the virtues of my honoured mother," pointing to the portrait, from which the distressed Walsingham hid his eyes.

“Talk not of injured innocence,” cried he, “for, alas! that conviction would unman a stoic, much more a wretch like me.”

The scene grew too affecting, and the Marquis begging Rosalie to retire, soon after left him.

Three days elapsed, during which time Walsingham was confined to his bed, in consequence of his irritation of mind having heightened the fever, and Rosalie attended him with the most affectionate care: He had also solicited the letters the Marquis had promised him, the effect of which so agitated him, he was obliged frequently to lay them aside, at the request of the tender Rosalie, whose tears flowed with equal poignancy as his own, and almost overpowered her drooping spirits:

One page in particular, read by Rosalie, whose voice could scarce articulate, almost drove him frantic; 'twas a full confession from Lady Lavinia, recounting the reason of her meeting the Chevalier that fatal evening which terminated his existence and her happiness.

Morency, it seems, had used every seductive and adulative argument to induce her to elope, supposing her heart then entirely at her own disposal, and vowing vengeance on Walsingham for his repeated and impertinent intrusions, little suspecting the

privilege he was entitled to usurp. Lavinia, terrified for the safety of her husband, conjured him to banish the idea of revenge, and on pain of her eternal displeasure ever to reveal, or cause Walsingham to suspect his partiality, thinking, by this means to avoid the dreaded encounter of an innocent, yet offended husband, and a furious and resolute lover, whom in reality her soul abhorred; but her placid amiable disposition, ever void of offence, strove if possible by gentle entreaty to prevail on Morency, while her terror depicting every calamity from so fatal a determination, had, in order to conceal it under the solemn threat she had made, met him on the terrace that evening, to extort the performance of his promise, and by that means insure the safety of her ever valued love, and what diabolical fiend could have discovered the assignation, known only to themselves, was a mystery her utmost vigilance could never develope.

This proof of affection stung Walsingham to the soul. "Is this the dreadful truth?" cried he, "Fatal victim of credulity: Alas: how the frenzy of jealousy veiled my senses: Yes, I heard her repeat every syllable this letter avows, but deaf to reason or a moment's reflection, I construed every sentence in the most different light, and can only recompense her wrongs

by promoting the happiness of my child, which shall be the study of my existence."

Rosalie now laid aside the papers, and Walsingham giving her the key of his portmanteau, begged her to take out his pocket book for something he wished to find, and turning over several letters a small piece of paper fell to the ground, which Rosalie picking up presented to her father. "I do not recollect what it can be," said he, "open it, my love." Rosalie obeyed, but it instantly fell from her hand and she turned pale. "Oh, 'tis the pearl cross," said Walsingham, "the amiable Waldegrave's legacy: But observing the agitation of his child, (who stood almost petrified, gazing alternately on him and then on the bauble) he caught her hand, and inquired the cause of her astonishment. "Only do me the favour, dear Sir, to inform me how you came in possession of this trinket, and I will then answer any question you please to ask."

"I received it," said he, "from the hands of a Mr. Waldegrave, a handsome comely youth, who was unfortunately shipwrecked, but saved by the timely assistance of our boat; he had floated four hours when he hailed our vessel, and we happily preserved him, but a fever ensuing in consequence, a few days terminated his existence: I must own I was particularly

struck with his figure and affable deportment, and never left his bed till he expired, a few minutes before which he took from his bosom this cross, pressed it to his lip, and begged me ever to keep it as the sacred relic of a faithful but unhappy lover.

“My story,” said he, “like myself, will be consigned to oblivion, nor shall I reveal the name of the angel from whose bosom I purloined this treasure, as it is very improbable you should ever behold her, yet should chance so ordain it, she will instantly recognise it when you repeat the hapless possessor of it was Frederic Waldegrave.”

Rosalie burst into tears. “Alas!” cried she, “’tis mine: And didst thou, hapless Waldegrave, treasure to the last moment of thy existence, this humble memorial of poor Rosalie?”

Walsingham soothed her. “More mysteries then have I elucidated,” said he, “but tell me, my lovely girl, the whole affair, in which your heart, alas! seems deeply interested.”

Rosalie obeyed, and repeated every minute circumstance, much to the satisfaction of Walsingham, who was delighted with her prudence, while sweetly blushing, she faintly acknowledged the prevalent partiality of Lord Edwin.

“A secreted passion was the source of your misfortunes,” said the sweet girl,

“and heaven avert it should be mine; in your bosom I repose my confidence, and earnestly solicit you will ever keep this little legacy in your own possession, as I must never wear it more; its history would create alarm in the bosom of Lord Edwin, and might throw a shade across my future happiness, although I solemnly avow I never entertained a thought injurious to the love of Lord Edwin, yet my bosom, ever alive to the sensations of friendship and compassion, instigated me to retaliate lenient politeness and gratitude, where prudence forbid a greater sacrifice; and sure the heart must be invulnerable to pity that did not feel a pang for the sufferings of meritorious virtue, and consecrate one tear to the hapless remembrance.”

Walsingham then consigned it to his pocket book, embraced his child, and promised inviolable secrecy of his treasured memorial.

CHAP. XXVI.

ON the day following he was permitted by his surgeon to leave his room, and take his seat at the family table, where the

glances of melancholy often obtruded for it had occasioned great inquiry and surprise amongst the household, although the affair had been smothered as much as possible, yet as Rosalie had ever been declared an orphan, it was necessary to report the decease of her father had been a fabrication, and he was now restored, by an unforeseen event, when in pursuit of his family and friends: Such was the prevalent story, and curiosity was tolerably suppressed.

The Marquis now began to perceive with regret, the partiality of his son, and taking him one day into his study, reprimanded his terror, on Rosalie's being stung by a hornet, as it plainly discovered an unusual degree of alarm and attention in the agitation of his anxious countenance, when Lord Edwin, unable to conceal his sentiments, confessed his interviews at Chammouny, and solicited, with the unfeigned tear of earnest love, his blessing and consent to an union of heart and sentiment Heaven only could dissolve.

"Is it thus, Edwin, your duplicity has exulted?" asked the Marquis sternly, glancing a look of ferocity on his son; "And has the fallacious snake I fostered in my bosom thus planned its grateful retaliation, by leaving its sting in the recess that protected it? Ah! Edwin, I much fear the

whole blame of this unfortunate attachment rests with you, for sure the heart of Rosalie is too pure, too tender, to harbour a thought injurious to my peace; I speak then, confess yourself culpable, if you have led the little stray lamb from its native vale, over each tempting flow'ry path, will you abandon it on a thorny precipice, from whose impending cliff it must perish in the gaping abyss, or gradually linger, like the stricken deer, forlorn and desolate, still bounding from steep to steep in search of comfort and protection, yet still augmenting but its misery: Part of the tale is now explored that long concealed her fate, but the clue is still tangled, and requires to be unravelled, and 'till elucidation explores every particle of disguise, Edwin shall never be united to Rosalie, for though I revere her virtues, and love her with the affection of a parent, no stigma shall rest on the offspring of Tankerville, no calumniate lip shall repeat corruptive censure, I therefore rely on your discretion, 'till a farther explanation, and confess your temerity astonishes me; your indulging a passion for an object totally unknown, and so humbly bred, must, if you had reflected a moment, have convinced you of the impropriety of your conduct: Supposing Rosalie had been the cottager in reality she was represented, would your unbounded passion have gratified itself by subjoining the

distaff with the crested helmet of your illustrious ancestry?"

Lord Edwin paused, fearful of irritating the Marquis, who seemed to be impatiently waiting his reply, and therefore summoning courage, and couching his sentiments in the most submissive form, he thus replied.

"If you require me to express the real effusions of the sincerity I feel," answered he, "the virtuous soul, graceful amiability, and unfeigned gratitude, I discovered in the lovely girl, had surely made me forget the properties of nobility, and in her cottage the splendour of high life had, in comparison, excited my pity and disgust, for I could there trace such interesting scenes of nature in her boundless luxuriance, as would have expanded your heart with every sublime inspiration it did mine. Chamouny was then to me a Paradise, and Rosalie the benignant angel to guide and explain the mysterious powers of creation, that raised my adorative ejaculation to the bountiful divinity, whose prolific hand had thus raised the wonderful and admirative beauties of this Elysian vale."

"You are mighty romantic," said the Marquis, "moralize no more, let prudence seal your lip, you know my sentiments; for though Rosalie is a woman I think perfectly formed to create happiness, yet, remember, consanguinity is my aversion;

however, I neither give nor extort a promise, for your happiness is too near allied to my heart to wish ever to subvert it, retire then, and leave me to my reflection, for my heart is at present too full to converse more on this subject."

Edwin bowed and was opening the door, as Rosalie gently tapped, unknowing the Marquis was in conversation, much less conceiving she was the subject of the tete-a-tete.

"I hope I don't intrude," said the lovely girl, the express picture of beautiful innocence, with a small basket of roses, "Permit me to request your acceptance of this charming rose, for I know it is your favourite flower as well as mine; I have just gathered a few, and am come to place it in your bosom as soon as I have divested it of its thorns," and seating herself on a duchess by the side of the Marquis, took out her scissors to clip them off.

The Marquis turned his eyes on Lord Edwin, who stood rapturously gazing on her in the attitude of admiration, with the door half closed, who catching his father's glance, silently pointed to Rosalie, pressed his hand to his heart, and sighed as he reluctantly drew the envious blank between them.

Rosalie's hat shading her eyes as she was busily employed, had concealed the reciprocal glance that had been exchanged, and

She wondered at the Marquis's unusually-cool reception. "Why so silent, dear Sir?" asked she, modestly placing the rose in his bosom, and making a smiling courtsey.

"May you, Rosalie, be ever as careful of planting a thorn in my bosom as you have been to guard me from the wound of these; but retire, my love, I am engaged with my writing, and cannot be interrupted; take charge of your present again, and preserve it 'till we meet at dinner, when I shall be more at leisure to admire it, and thank the attentive donor."

Rosalie sealed the pardon of her intrusion by kissing his hand, and wishing him good morning, left him to his private meditations.

"What could the Marquis mean," thought she, as she stopped to admire the geraniums in the gallery windows, "by bidding me be careful of implanting a thorn? Yet, he did not angrily reprove me, and I am sure I am not conscious of deserving his censure."

Such were her reflections, when her father passing through the anti-chamber, disturbed her.

"Rosalie," said he, "I have just received letters from London, in answer to those I wrote three days since, and am sorry to say, I have very unpleasing accounts of a considerable debt, by the failure of a capital merchant, and must in consequence set

off to-morrow for the Metropolis, if the Marquis is in his study I must speak with him, as the merchant is a friend of his, and he, in consequence, can advise me what measure is most expedient to adopt."

Rosalie expressed her concern, and Walsingham passed on to the study, where delivering the letter he almost petrified the Marquis, who, after deliberating in the most judicious manner, determined to accompany him, and render every possible service to both parties; his chaise and four was ordered by seven the next morning, in which the travellers taking their seats drove off.

CH A P. XXVII.

LORD EDWIN had now opportunity to disclose his father's conversation to Rosalie, and each secretly rejoiced at the favourable aspect of their future hopes.

The Castle vacated by its senior inmates, the juvenility of the remaining group formed numerous sprightly amusements, unbiassed by the contradiction of Lady Mentoria, who, although too far advanced in years to join the festive dance, still loved to preside and enjoy the delight they partook.

When the travellers arrived at the Hotel they retired to rest, and the next morning proceeded to the house of Mr. Stanley, where the dreadful complication of his affairs baffled all hopes of compositive adjustment, and at the suit of a merciless peremptory creditor, he was seized, sent to a spunging-house, and all bail refused; thither they immediately repaired, and found the forlorn object a prey to misery, severe reflection's acute pang, and the victim of extortion.

The Marquis making himself known, offered bail, and a person was dispatched with a note to the creditor, begging the favour of half an hour's conversation.

During the interval of his absence a hackney coach drew up to the door, and a number of vociferous tongues in the passage roused the Marquis's attention, and he opened the door, where he discovered several men inhumanly dragging a genteel-looking female, who was struggling to draw the hood of her cloak over a face that bore the vestiges of sorrow and oppression.

"Why, you need not be so fearful of shewing your face," cried one of the savages, "'twill be pretty well known in a few days at the prison, where it is my thoughts you'll be glad to make your market of it for a meal's meat, or egad you'll soon be starved."

“Never insult distress,” said the Marquis, removing his huge paw from her delicate arm. “Suffer me,” continued he, addressing the head officer, “to inquire the fate of this poor helpless creature.”

“Why she is placed here for half a year’s lodging, at the suit of her landord,” answered he, “and it seems no one can give bail for her, but its no wonder, this is always the fruit of wicked deeds.”

“Morality from a person of your description,” rejoined the Marquis, “ill suits, and I shall only form my opinion from the circumstances I collect from her, whatever inference you may have drawn from them I am inclined to be lenient, would you were also; however, let the coach wait half an hour, during which time I will be answerable your prisoner does not escape dishonourably.”

The officer bowed and conducted the female to a private apartment, the Marquis and Walsingham followed, and the door was closed, when the female not wishing longer to conceal her face, threw back her cloak, and to the fancy of Walsingham discovered a set of features not totally unknown, though much impaired by distress, nor could he at the moment recollect where they were once so familiar to him.”

“If an account of my unfortunate life can claim any pretension to your favour, gentlemen,” said she, “I shall conceive it an obligation which I owe to your humane interference: Scarce need I say, I am enlisted on the page of destructive error, as a wretched victim of shame and sorrow; I have seen thirty-six years, half of which, alas! could not on retrospection afford one instance, of prudence, virtue, or honour: Deprived of my parents very early in life, I was left to the care of a morose old guardian, from whose severe restriction I eloped with a young officer at the age of eighteen, and from that hour I date the commencement of my sorrows.”

“Abandoned by my friends and relatives I had no remaining source of protection, and betrayed and involved in ruin, necessity compelled me to pursue a course of life I once should have shuddered at. Innumerable have been my transgressions, and once the impetuosity of real and fervent love instigated a crime founded on jealousy, no penitence of mine can ever reclaim: Alas! had Walsingham loved like me, the wretched Caroline had never practised the cruel scheme that eternally has banished his peace.”

Here a flood of tears prevented her recital, while the Marquis and Walsingham were rivetted to their chairs with astonishment.

“ Answer, wretched woman,” said the latter, “ if to the name of Caroline you subjoin the title of Bertie ?”

“ I surely do,” answered she.

“ Oh God !” reiterated Walsingham, the measure of my woes are then complete, can you not on recollection trace on these sun-enbrowned features the resemblance of Walsingham ?”

Miss Bertie earnestly gazed on him uttered a shriek, and fainted ; the distracted inquiring Walsingham speedily revived her, while the agitated Marquis awaiting the dreaded discovery, involuntarily drew his chair farther, with a look of relentless abhorrence, on the torture of suspicion, and for a moment compassion vacated the recess of his bosom, while relieved by the friendly effusion of composing tears, Miss Bertie thus continued.

“ Heavens ! am I again doomed to behold the victim of my duplicity ? Yet, ere I am conducted to my penitential cell, suffer me to repeat the cruelties I have inflicted, and the innocence I have injured : Chance, you well knew, first threw me in your company at the Opera, and under your friendly patronage I subsisted in elegance and happiness, for my heart at that time, though void of every impression which tended to virtue, still felt the most ardent and sincere love for you, but in three

months you honourably quitted me, and left England, on a sudden expedition with a friend. Six months after consigned me a new companion, and with him I took a trip to Paris, where I soon beheld the beautiful and justly adored Lady Lavinia; fame soon spread the report of your mutual attachment, and fired with the frenzy of jealousy, (whose spark was again soon fanned to a flame) I determined to plan a scheme of engaging the celebrated Chevalier Morency to pass a few hours with me in the absence of my enamorado, when I left no stratagem untried to spur his vindictive spirit, persuade him Lavinia secretly adored him, though her prudery avoided an explicit confession, and urged him, by every possible fallacy, to elope with her, and having learnt from the domestics you was setting out for Versailles, I intimated an idea of his supplying your situation, and begging half an hour's chat with Lady Lavinia on the terrace, where should she repulse his addressee, a chaise and four was the next evening to carry her artfully away, thus I should have thrown myself in your way, kindly consoled your loss, and hoped once more to gain the treasured heart I so sincerely adored, for the villainy of Morency, and apparent compliance of Lavinia, would, I trusted, have totally eradicated every impression her attractive charms

had made, and Caroline Bertie have once more been blessed with the affectionate attention and provision of the fascinating Walsingham."

"The fatal billet of assignation I dispatched by a stranger, dressing myself in man's apparel, previous to delivering it, to elude all possible discovery; the effects it produced are alas! but too well known, and I learnt, too late! I had injured the faithful wife, and not the mistress, as I then conceived her to be. Alas! the merited vengeance of offended heaven has poured its devoted wrath on this guilty head ever since: For three months ago I accepted the support of a very genteel, sensible, and, as I thought, honourable man, but, to my sorrow, the faro-bank soon divested him of his ample property, and one unlucky night the faithless dice immersed him in the vortex of destruction, to the amount of 3,000*l.* and unable to discharge the debt of honour, he privately and precipitately left London, and has never been heard of since, which information I received two days after by my landlord, who demanded immediate payment of me, for lodging, and several debts contracted in different places. This was a severe and unexpected stroke in the midst of apparent affluence, I had but five guineas by me, and that, alas! was but a fortnight's pay."

“ Instantly I dispatched several notes to various people in high-life, who had formerly favoured me with their company, but like a real child of misery, I found no friendly hand to relieve an imploring wanderer : One was absent on his travels, and his return uncertain; a second on important business at the House of Commons; a third engaged with his own affairs, and did not wish to add to the perplexities he was already immersed in; a fourth was deaf to the tale of sorrow, whose self-gratification had lost the pleasure of enjoyment; and a fifth replied, his memory did not furnish him with the recollection of the unfortunate suppliant, Many more proofs of disappointment could I enumerate, the ultimate of which was the seizure of my apparel, rapaciously torn from me, and an immediate conveyance to this school of iniquity and extortion, and here too I have parted with every superfluous covering to obtain the coarse and scanty meal that supported my wretched existence, and I have no comfort left but the hope of a speedy end to my woes, in the gloomy cell of a cheerless prison.”

“ Adieu, then, Mr. Walsingham, best, yet most injured of men, 'tis impossible I can ever compensate the bitter pangs I have cost you, I shall now fly to the arms of despair, a prey to the endless remorse of an

evil conscience! Can heaven inflict a severer punishment? Oh! no. Yet, I shall feel one faint sensation of consolation, by having acknowledged my perfidy and removed the weight of my crime from the bosom of some innocent suspected."

She then rose to depart, but the Marquis detained her by inquiring the amount of her debts in general, to which she replied, "fifty guineas."

The Marquis then drawing a bank note from his pocket book to that amount, presented it to her," As the child of woe," said he, "I bestow my charity, but as the murderers of life, peace, and happiness, I view you with an eye of abhorrence; an injured brother cannot pardon a wretch like thee, but trusts he possesses the requisite mercy of a christian, by snatching you from that infamous mansion of diabolical vice and destruction, whither those harpies were dragging you, and if your contrition is real, and you would swear to lead a life of penitence, I will provide for you in some solitary recess where your errors may be buried in oblivion."

Miss Bertie overpowered by such unmerited generosity, fell at his feet, and bathing them with her tears, promised the strictest obedience to his commands. "I have," said she, "one friend still left, who resides in South Carolina, to her I will

immediately write, and if her friendship still glows, and she will give me her protection, I will, with your permission, undertake the voyage, there my character will be free from censure, and, I trust, by leaving the scene of my iniquity, I shall also leave my vices, and flying thus determined from the lures of temptation, regain once more the path of virtue, and procure by my suitable ability some domesticated and genteel department in the circle of some family, through the recommendation of my friend, where I may at least become an industrious and useful member of society, for tho' I must ever remain a fallen star, the effulgence of others may reflect, from their un sullied ray, a feeble lustre on my fainter gleam."

"Alas! the flowers of fancy, to my intoxicated sense, exhaled more fragrant perfume in the delusive paths of dissipation, than in the tranquil shades of virtue and wisdom, where a straggling thorn though inflicting but a trivial wound, disgusted, and determined me to turn to paths more seducing, and apparently devoid of those injurious briars, where I too eagerly pursued the magic winding, nor paused to reflect on the length of my ramble, 'till I found myself in an inextricable labyrinth, surrounded by pernicious weeds, exhaling poison and infecting the very touch: I now

shrunk with dismay, and vainly endeavoured to retrace my wandering steps, but the intricacy subverted my design, no friendly clue was left to guide the wanderer back, and lost to every hope of deliverance, my only remaining consolation was to join the deluded group who soon surrounded me, and by their persuasive fallacy and advice I soon conquered my aversion to this destructive path, and dared to smile, like them, defiance at morality."

The Marquis, though repugnant to her character, listened with a degree of satisfaction to her self-crimination: "I shall remain a week longer in town," said he, "therefore provide yourself a decent habitation, 'till your friend's letter arrives, enclose it under cover to me, and I shall then judge what prospect of success you have in view, when, if your friend is willing to receive you, I will empower my steward to conduct you safe on board the first vessel that sails, and all the recompense I ask is to receive an annual letter, informing me you merit my commiseration, by strictly adhering to your solemn promise, of reforming your late dreadful conduct." He then added a present of five guineas, and promised to furnish her equipment of necessaries during her voyage.

"Walsingham's purse can never be authorised to relieve you," continued the

Marquis, "and mine only must be considered as bestowing its mite on a stranger; for, alas! though your crime be imprinted on the new fallen snow, and dissolved by the first beam of compassion, should memory too busily renew the tale to the attentive ear of justice, I fear the chill of horror soon would freeze the mass 'ere half dissolved, and the congealing traces re-appear; fly then, ill-fated female, lose not a moment to redeem the virtues dread experience has taught you so earnestly to preserve."

Miss Bertie now paid her grateful acknowledgments to the Marquis, but did not dare meet the eyes of Walsingham; her release was immediately procured, and she drove off in the coach to an obscure street in search of an abode during her stay, promising to inform the Marquis of her situation, and every minute particular he had enjoined her to observe.

By this time the servant returned with the irritated creditor, who after repeating many invectives, accepted the bail, and the unhappy Stanley was released, and restored to his dejected family, 'till his affairs could be arranged, which detained the Marquis and Walsingham several days, during which time, Miss Bertie begged the honour of a call at her humble habitation, where they found her industriously employ-

ed in an ample supply of needle-work, and situated in a neat and respectable family, yet Walsingham never saw her without the most painful emotion.

“You have performed the duties of a christian,” would he often say to the Marquis, “but, alas! my heart rebels too strongly at present to retaliate good for such unmerited evil, nor can I urge one excuse in her behalf, while my unconquerable aversion is continually reminding me of her cruel duplicity; and I often wonder, noble friend, at the benign compassion you have shewn my errors also, which, thank heaven, are in some measure palliated by the discovery we have lately made, and I trust you do not conceive me the culpable wretch you was once taught to believe me.”

CHAP. XXVIII.

ON the following evening they returned to the Castle, where Miss Bertie's relation was explained, pitied, and condemned.

Mr. Walsingham now began to think of re-visiting India, disposing of his plantations, and returning to England, to spend the remainder of his days in happiness and tranquillity in the enjoyment of his friends, and the affluence of his ample possessions.

The dormant spark of Lord Edwin's passion for the beautiful Rosalie now revived, and, half timid, half resolved, he took the first opportunity of soliciting Walsingham's consent to his intended union, and begging him to urge his influence with the Marquis.

Walsingham listened with delight, 'twas his heart's most earnest wish, and would crown the summit of his future felicity, provided his noble friend assented: He then accompanied Lord Edwin to the Marquis's chamber, and by the persuasive eloquence of love, friendship, and honour, the Marquis banished his objections, since the elucidation of the mystery, which would have been its total prevention, and through the intercession of his family bestowed his blessing and consent.

"Would she were not so near allied," did he often say, "but as the finger of impropriety cannot fully the lustre of this brilliant, it may as well grace my Edwin's coronet as beam its enviable refulgence on a less worthy possessor; in her I consign a treasure to your protection, and be it your

care to preserve and improve its inestimable value."

Lady Mentoria expressed a fervent wish that the nuptials of her nieces might be celebrated at the Castle, on the same day with Lord Edwin and Rosalie, as it was her desire to attend the bridal trio to the altar, previous to Mr. Walsingham re-visiting India, as fate might create a thousand intervening preventions 'ere he again reached the shores of England; and the Marquis ever ready to please and oblige his venerable aunt, agreed to her proposal, and every preparation was immediately ordered for the splendid celebration.

The environs of the Castle rung with the joyful news, while the brains of half the vicinity was turned with wonder and delight, and Lady Mentoria, as directress, inspected every decoration and arrangement on the occasion. Lord and Lady Lansdowne arrived three days previous to the celebration, and the Count and Countess of Valletort, relatives of Lord Carlton, accompanied by the Ladies Julia and Clara Fitzroy, sisters to the Countess, who were deputed bride-maids to the Ladies Adela and Louisa, while Lady Selina Courtney officiated in the same character for Rosalie, and was acknowledged the most graceful and elegant figure of the festive group.

Innumerable were the boxes of paraphernalia arriving at the Castle daily, for the decoration of the bridal train, while the gentlemen amused themselves in commenting on the current report of Miss Villars's elopement to Scotland, with the little fribble Col. Ardvine, whose profligacy and gaming it was surmised would soon reduce him to the lowest ebb of misery and destruction, as his notorious character was too well known, and circulated with additional aggravated vices amongst every class of public libertinism.

Alas! deluded and incorrigible Georgina, what desperate trials await thy boasted stoicism; may'st thou be enabled to support them with a suitable degree of firmness, nor the pointed finger of scorn thou hast levelled at others retaliate its dire direction towards thee, may thy example preserve others from the same obstinate course, and thy misfortunes be softened by the lenient hand of mercy. Such was the effusion of compassion from the fair inmates of the Castle, whose bosoms deplored the errors and misfortunes of the misguided Georgina.

Every domestic was risen on the nuptial morn by five o'clock: Le Brun was flying with his usual agility up four stairs on a stretch with the Marquis's cut-velvet suit, while Carlos was displaying to Agnes Lord

Edwin's diamond buckles, and Gertrude inquiring if she could offer her assistance amongst the ladies, as Andrew was viewing his new suit, and delighting himself with the thoughts of the ingenious disposal he meant to make of some choice exotics and roses, by the secret permission of Lady Mentoria.

"I know who'll look handsomest," said he, as Wilson passed through the gallery with Lady Louisa's robe.

"Why, my Lady to be sure," answered the pert attendant, perfectly understanding his partial idea, and slamming the door, hurried away.

By eleven the elegant group had assembled in the drawing-room, the blushing brides wore each a dress exactly similar, a plain muslin robe loosely fastened over white sarfenet, and long veils negligently thrown over their beautiful ringlets, unsullied by powder, quite in morning dishabille by the Marquis's desire, who arranged the procession to the chapel in the following order: Lord Edwin and Rosalie led the way, Lord Carlton and Lady Adela followed, and Sir Henry and Lady Louisa preceded the three bride-maids, and their respective beaux, while the Marquis and Lady Mentoria, with the Count and Countess brought up the rear, and the attendants closed the procession: The avenues

of the park were lined with villagers, and the chapel doors were thrown open to admit a view of the ceremony ; on the altar was spread a covering of white sattin, edged with silver fringe, while three chalices of gold contained the most beautiful exotics, and from the center one blazed aromatic incense, and a wreath and branches of roses intermixed with myrtle, richly waved in impending festoons round the table, and formed a most beautiful appearance, while it delighted the spectator, for Andrew alone had invented and arranged the charming decoration, to please and surprise the party ; three stools, covered with the same fringed sattin supported the adorative knee of each blooming bride ; and returning to the Castle, Andrew had again evinced his ingenuity by strewing the avenue with blossoms.

This mark of attention pleased the Marquis, "Thou shalt not go unrewarded," Andrew," said he, as the grateful old man gently wiped a tear of heart-felt satisfaction on his clean spotted silk handkerchief, drawn from its long-hoarded recess on the present joyful occasion.

The brides soon after retired to dress for dinner. Rosalie's robe was of white crape, spangled with silver, and the train looped with pearls, and encircled by wreaths of yellow roses crossing the petticoat, fastened

by silver cordage and tassels of bullion. Lady Adela's dress differed only in the flowers; wreaths of convolvulus festooned her petticoat, and a drapery sash of violet satin crossed the train, depending from the shoulder and fastened in negligent elegance on the left side: While Lady Louisa's fancy selected the pomegranate blossom to adorn an exact similar robe, and turbans of the same texture, with elegant plumes of ostrich and paradise feathers, ornamented and constituted their head dresses.

Lady Mentoria, before the charming brides left their dressing-room exhibited her generosity, by presenting a case of jewels, from which she distributed elegant memorials of her affection; to Lady Adela she assigned a superb diamond crescent for her turban; to Lady Louisa a diamond plume; and to her charming Rosalie a brilliant bandeau of exquisite beauty for her hair, while the generosity of her father had also exemplified itself in the choice of an elegant pair of ear-rings and necklace, of beautiful pearls, with an enameled watch set with the same, and Lord Edwin fastened his own incomparable miniature, set with brilliants, round the bosom of his lovely bride, when she descended in full blaze of beauty to the drawing-room.

The bridegrooms were elegantly dressed

in embroidered suits, but Lord Edwin's expressive and charming countenance added to his graceful form, rendered him the most captivating object of admiration, nor had honest Andrew erroneously adjudged the prize of beauty to Rosalie, who, indeed, far eclipsed the rival sisters, and was uncommonly cheerful and enchanting the whole day, which was passed in the highest festivity, and a sumptuous entertainment given to a numerous and brilliant company, nor were the villagers exempt from sharing the general bounty, as an ample and excellent dinner was provided them on the back lawn.

Lady Mentoria's pensioners too, though sixty miles distant, had not been forgotten, and the same festivity reigned in their tranquil village on the occasion, while their evening concluded with dancing, bonfires, and a rustic epithalamium, composed by Evelyn, and chanted by every villager, while those who could not sing, readily and earnestly repeated it.

A private ball in the evening at the Castle which broke up at twelve, completed the entertainment, when the Count and Countess of Valletort, with Lord and Lady Carlton, and the Ladies Fitzroy, retired to Carlton Villa, about five miles distant: Sir Henry and Lady Lansdowne to their seat also, in the same vicinity, ac-

accompanied by two of Sir Henry's intimate friends: and Lord Edwin and Lady St. Laurens, with their elegant bride-maid, Lady Selina Courtney, remained at the Castle, where they continued about three weeks, when they set off for their town residence in Grosvenor-Square, and the delighted parent undertook his voyage to India, about a month afterwards.

Miss Bertie fulfilled her promise of enclosing her friend's letter to the Marquis the moment it arrived, and Montague in return was dispatched to London, with orders to supply her equipment, and see her safe on board, under the Captain's protection, and the Marquis found his heart revive with an unusual glow of satisfaction, as Montague related his last view of her, waving her handkerchief from the vessel, and repeating a thousand grateful blessings and prayers for the peace and happiness of the Marquis.

"You have surely, my Lord," added Montague, "saved the poor drooping creature from the brink of destruction."

"Thy beneficent heart at least is willing to hope so," replied the Marquis, "What good may result from my plan heaven knows, but I trust I have removed her from iniquity, and prevented her ever doing more mischief in England, however her propensities may be renewed in a foreign clime."

Lord and Lady St. Lauren's copying each other's virtues were the complete patterns of connubial love, respected and revered by every class of society.

An uninterrupted bliss gilded the passing day: when a letter from the faithful Madelon tended to prove the spark of grateful affection had not been extinguished on the altar of munificence, and that memory would still proportion the reward of merit: The letter was, as usual, fraught with every sentiment of affection and respect, and communicated the news of Madelon and Lindor's intended nuptials, in a few weeks, from the time it left Chamouny; it also expressed, Giraldine grew infirm, and Reuben was subject to a fixed rheumatic, so that Josephine now despaired of ever visiting England, as attendant to her valued friend, for the marriage of Madelon would totally confine her as nurse and manager of the cottage, and it would remain for her alone to smooth the pillow of infirmity, and support the crutch of decrepitude. Lindor too subjoined respectful remembrance, and hinted his approaching happiness.

Lady St. Laurens read the letter with delight, and instantly penned one in return, expressing her pleasure at the news of Madelon's happiness, and desiring her to fix on the most pleasant and commodious va-

cant cottage, which she requested might be furnished with every requisite convenience, to defray which expence she inclosed a bank note, and a handsome present for Josephine, whom she enjoined to be virtuous and dutiful, and added, she should ever consider Reuben and Giraldine her pensioners, for whose support she should faithfully transmit twenty pounds per annum, as a memorial of gratitude for past kindness to herself and Lord Edwin.

The delight this letter gave the faithful cottagers is better felt than described, and the Vale of Chamouny rung with the echoed praises of Lady St. Laurens's generosity.

Carlo earnestly soliciting Marcella might preserve a station in the family, received Lord Edwin's consent to send for her, and thus render every party with whom he was formerly interested, if possible, as happy as himself, and as he had witnessed the virtuous affection of Marcella, he did not hesitate to comply with Carlos's request.

Mr. Walsingham, after a prosperous and pleasant voyage, settled his affairs, and returning to England, presented his beloved daughter with a considerable fortune, and became alternately an inmate of the Castle and Grosvenor-Square, where he would often remark, with adoration to the Supreme Being, that the sunshine of happiness gilded the close of life's evening, though the tempest of misfortune had ob-

scured the brightest tints of morning, that promised so fair and unclouded a day; and he trusted the winter of life would be cherished by the consolatory hope of an eternal spring, visiting his mouldering urn, and renovating those blossoms of virtue in their glorious transplantation, that too warm a sun had withered in their former bloom, and left them drooping and forlorn to the direction of the impetuous tempest, whose ruder blast had torn and devastated every trembling leaf.

Murmur not, thou victim of misfortune, for the hand that levels the shaft of poignant agony can administer the antidotal balm, to extract the venom, as his benignant mercy shall direct, and inculcate, by indubitable proofs, that the mortal, however severely afflicted, should never distrust Providence.

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